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PAUL FABER, SURGEON.

VOL. II.

PAUL FABER, SURGEON

BY

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"DAVID ELGINBROD," "ROBERT FALCONER,"
"ALEC FORBES OF HOWGLEN,"
&c., &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES

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PAUL FABER, SURGEON.

CHAPTER I.

TWO MINDS.

ALL this time poor Faber, to his offer of himself to Juliet, had received no answer but a swoon—or something very near it. Every attempt he made to see her alone at the rectory had been foiled; and he almost came to the conclusion that the curate and his wife had set themselves to prejudice against himself a mind already prejudiced against his principles. It added to his uneasiness that, as he soon discovered, she went regularly to church. He knew the power and persuasion of Wingfold, and looked upon his influence as antagonistic to his hopes. Pride, anger, and fear were all at

work in him; but he went on calling, and did his best to preserve an untroubled demeanour. Juliet imagined no change in his feelings, and her behaviour to him was not such as to prevent them from deepening still.

Every time he went, it was with a desperate resolution of laying his hand on the veil in which she had wrapt herself, but every time he found it impossible, for one reason or another, to make a single movement towards withdrawing it. Again and again he tried to write to her; but the haunting suspicion that she would lay his epistle before her new friends, always made him throw down his pen in a smothering indignation. He found himself compelled to wait what opportunity chance or change might afford him.

When he learned that she had gone to live with the Drakes, it was a relief to him; for although he knew the minister was far more personal in his hostility than Wingfold, he was confident his influence over her would not be so great; and now he would have a better chance, he thought, of seeing her alone.

Meantime he took satisfaction in knowing that he did not neglect a single patient, and that in no case had he been less successful either as to diagnosis or treatment because of his trouble. He pitied himself just a little as a martyr to the truth, a martyr the more meritorious that the truth to which he sacrificed himself gave him no hope for the future, and for the present no shadow of compensation beyond the satisfaction of not being deceived. It remains a question, however, which there was no one to put to Faber—whether he had not some amends in relief from the notion, vaguely it may be, yet unpleasantly haunting many minds—of a supreme being—a deity—putting forth claims to obedience—an uncomfortable sort of phantom, however imaginary, for one to have brooding above him, and continually coming between him and the freedom of an else empty universe. To the human soul as I have learned to know it, an empty universe would be as an exhausted receiver to the lungs that thirst for air; but Faber liked the idea: how he would have liked the reality remains another thing. I suspect that what we call damnation is something as near it as it can be

made; itself it cannot be, for even the damned must live by God's life. Was it, I repeat, no compensation for his martyrdom to his precious truth, to know that to none had he to render an account? Was he relieved from no misty sense of a moral consciousness judging his, and ready to enforce its rebuke—a belief which seems to me to involve the highest idea, the noblest pledge, the richest promise of our nature? There may be men in whose turning from implicit to explicit denial, no such element of relief is concerned—I cannot tell; but although the structure of Paul Faber's life had in it material of noble sort, I doubt if he was one of such.

The summer at length reigned lordly in the land. The roses were in bloom, from the black purple to the warm white. Ah, those roses! he must indeed be a God who invented the roses. They sank into the red hearts of men and women, caused old men to sigh, young men to long, and women to weep with strange ecstatic sadness. But their scent made Faber lonely and poor, for the rose-heart would not open its leaves to him.

The winds were soft and odour-laden. The wide meadows through which flowed the river, seemed to smite the eye with their greenness; and the black and red and white kine bent down their sleek necks among the marsh-marigolds and the meadow-sweet and the hundred lovely things that border the level water-courses, and fed on the blessed grass. Along the banks, here with nets, there with rod and line, they caught the gleaming salmon, and his silver armour flashed useless in the sun. The old pastor sat much in his little summer-house, and paced his green walk on the border of the Lythe; but in all the gold of the sunlight, in all the glow and the plenty around him, his heart was oppressed with the sense of his poverty. It was not that he could not do the thing he would, but that he could not meet and rectify the thing he had done. He could behave, he said to himself, neither as a gentleman nor a Christian, for lack of money; and, worst of all, he could not get rid of a sense of wrong—of rebellious heavings of heart, of resentments, of doubts that came thick upon him—not of the existence of God, nor of his goodness towards

men in general, but of his kindness to himself. Logically, no doubt, they were all bound in one, and the being that could be unfair to a beetle, could not be God, could not make a beetle; but our feelings, especially where a wretched self is concerned, are notably illogical.

The morning of a glorious day came in with saffron, gold, and crimson. The colour sobered, but the glory grew. The fleeting dyes passed, but the azure sky, the white clouds, and the yellow fire remained. The larks dropped down to their breakfast. The kine had long been busy at theirs, for they had slept their short night in the midst of their food. Everything that could move was in motion, and what could not move was shining, and what could not shine was feeling warm. But the pastor was tossing restless. He had had a troubled night. The rent of his house fell due with the miserable pittance allowed him by the church; but the hard thing was not that he had to pay nearly the whole of the latter to meet the former, but that he must first take it. The thought of that burned in his veins like poison. But he had no choice. To refuse it would be

dishonest; it would be to spare or perhaps indulge his feelings at the expense of the guiltless. He must not kill himself, he said, because he had insured his life, and the act would leave his daughter nearly destitute. Yet how was the insurance any longer to be paid? It *was* hard, with all his faults, to be brought to this. It *was* hard that he who all his life had been urging people to have faith, should have his own turned into a mockery!

Here heart and conscience together smote him. Well might his faith be mocked, for what better was it than a mockery itself! Where was this thing he called his faith? Was he not cherishing, talking flat unbelief?—as much as telling God he did *not* trust in him? Where was the faithlessness of which his faithlessness complained? A phanton of its own! Yea, let God be true and every man a liar! Had the hour come, and not the money? A fine faith it was that depended on the very presence of the help!—that required for its existence that the supply should come before the need!—a fine faith in truth, which still would follow in the rear of sight!—But why then did God leave

him thus without faith? Why did not God make him able to trust? He had prayed quite as much for faith as for money. His conscience replied, "That is your part—the thing you will not do. If God put faith into your heart without your stirring up your heart to believe, the faith would be God's and not yours. It is true all is God's; he made this you call *me*, and made it able to believe, and gave you himself to believe in; and if after that he were to make you believe without your doing your utmost part, he would be making you down again into a sort of holy dog, not making you grow a man like Christ Jesus his Son."—"But I have tried hard to trust in him," said the little self.—"Yes, and then fainted and ceased," said the great self, the conscience.

Thus it went on in the poor man's soul. Ever and anon he said to himself, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him," and ever and anon his heart sickened afresh, and he said to himself, "I shall go down to the grave with shame, and my memorial will be debts unpaid, for the Lord hath forsaken me." All the night he had lain wrestling with fear and doubt:

fear was hard upon him, but doubt was much harder. "If I could but trust," he said, "I could endure anything."

In the splendour of the dawn, he fell into a troubled sleep, and a more troubled dream, which woke him again to misery. Outside his chamber, the world was rich in light, in song, in warmth, in odour, in growth, in colour, in space; inside, all was to him gloomy, groanful, cold, musty, ungenial, dingy, confined; yet there was he more at ease, shrunk from the light, and in the glorious morning that shone through the chinks of his shutters, saw but an alien common day, not the coach of his Father, come to carry him yet another stage towards his home. He was in want of nothing at the moment. There were no holes in the well-polished shoes that seemed to keep ghostly guard outside his chamber-door. The clothes that lay by his bedside were indeed a little threadbare, but sound and spotless. The hat that hung in the passage below might have been much shabbier without necessarily indicating poverty. His walking-stick had a gold knob like any earl's. If he did choose to smoke a

churchwarden, he had a great silver-mounted meerschaum on his mantelshelf. True, the butcher's shop had for some time contributed nothing to his dinners, but his vegetable diet agreed with him. He would himself have given any man time, would as soon have taken his child by the throat as his debtor, had worshipped God after a bettering fashion for forty years at least, and yet would not give God time to do his best for him—the best that perfect love, and power limited only by the lack of full concent in the man himself, could do.

His daughter always came into his room the first thing in the morning. It was plain to her that he had been more restless than usual, and at sight of his glazy red-rimmed eyes and gray face, her heart sank within her. For a moment she was half angry with him, thinking in herself that if she believed as he did, she would never trouble her heart about anything: her head should do all the business. But with his faith, she would have done just the same as he. It is one thing to be so used to certain statements and modes of thought that you take all for true, and quite another

so to believe the heart of it all, that you are in essential and imperturbable peace and gladness because of it. But oh, how the poor girl sighed for the freedom of a God to trust in! She could content herself with the husks the swine ate, if only she knew that a father sat at the home-heart of the universe, wanting to have her. Faithful in her faithlessness, she did her best to comfort her *believing* father: beyond the love that offered it, she had but cold comfort to give. He did not listen to a word she said, and she left him at last with a sigh, and went to get him his breakfast. When she returned, she brought him his letters with his tea and toast. He told her to take them away: she might open them herself if she liked; they could be nothing but bills! She might take the tray too; he did not want any breakfast: what right had he to eat what he had no money to pay for! There would be a long bill at the baker's next! What right had any one to live on other people! Dorothy told him she paid for every loaf as it came, and that there was no bill at the baker's, though indeed he had done his best to begin one. He stretch-

ed out his arms, drew her down to his bosom, said she was his only comfort, then pushed her away, turned his face to the wall, and wept. She saw it would be better to leave him, and knowing in this mood he would eat nothing, she carried the tray with her. A few moments after, she came rushing up the stair like a wind, and entered his room swiftly, her face "white with the whiteness of what is dead."

CHAPTER II.

THE MINISTER'S BEDROOM.

THE next day, in the afternoon, old Lisbeth appeared at the rectory, with a hurried note, in which Dorothy begged Mr. Wingfold to come and see her father. The curate rose at once and went. When he reached the house, Dorothy, who had evidently been watching for his arrival, herself opened the door.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "Nothing alarming, I hope?"

"I hope not," she answered. There was a strange light on her face, like that of a sunless sky on a deep, shadowed well. "But I am a little alarmed about him. He has suffered much of late. Ah, Mr. Wingfold, you don't know how good he is! Of course, being no friend to the church——"

"I don't wonder at that, the church is so little of a friend to herself," interrupted the curate, relieved to find her so composed, for as he came along he had dreaded something terrible.

"He wants very much to see you. He thinks perhaps you may be able to help him. I am sure if you can't, nobody can. But please don't heed much what he says about himself. He is feverish and excited. There is such a thing—is there not?—as a morbid humility? I don't mean a false humility, but one that passes over into a kind of self-disgust."

"I know what you mean," answered the curate, laying down his hat: he never took his hat into a sick-room.

Dorothy led the way up the narrow creaking stairs.

It was a lowly little chamber in which the once popular preacher lay—not so good as that he had occupied when a boy, two stories above his father's shop. That shop had been a thorn in his spirit in the days of his worldly success, but again and again this morning he had been remembering it as a very haven of comfort and

peace. He almost forgot himself into a dream of it once; for one blessed moment, through the upper half of the window he saw the snow falling in the street, while he sat inside and half under the counter, reading Robinson Crusoe! Could anything short of heaven be so comfortable?

As the curate stepped in, a grizzled head turned towards him a haggard face with dry bloodshot eyes, and a long hand came from the bed to greet him.

"Ah, Mr. Wingfold!" cried the minister, "God has forsaken me. If he had only forgotten me, I could have borne that, I think; for, as Job says, the time would have come when he would have had a desire to the work of his hands. But he has turned his back upon me, and taken his free Spirit from me. He has ceased to take his own way, to do his will with me, and has given me my way and my will. Sit down, Mr. Wingfold. You cannot comfort me, but you are a true servant of God, and I will tell you my sorrow. I am no friend to the church, as you know, but——"

"So long as you are a friend of its head, that

goes for little with me," said the curate. "But if you will allow me, I should like to say just one word on the matter."

He wished to try what a diversion of thought might do; not that he foolishly desired to make him forget his trouble, but that he knew from experience any gap might let in comfort.

"Say on, Mr. Wingfold. I am a worm and no man."

"It seems, then, to me a mistake for any community to spend precious energy upon even a just finding of fault with another. The thing is, to trim the lamp and clean the glass of our own, that it may be a light to the world. It is just the same with communities as with individuals. The community which casts if it be but the mote out of its own eye, does the best thing it can for the beam in its neighbour's. For my part, I confess that, so far as the clergy form and represent the church of England, it is and has for a long time been doing its best—not its worst, thank God—to serve God and Mammon."

"Ah! that's my beam!" cried the minister. "I have been serving Mammon assiduously. I

served him not a little in the time of my prosperity, with confidence and show, and then in my adversity with fears and complaints. Our Lord tells us expressly that we are to take no thought for the morrow, because we cannot serve God and Mammon. I have been taking thought for a hundred morrows, and that not patiently, but grumbling in my heart at his dealings with me. Therefore now he has cast me off."

"How do you know that he has cast you off?" asked the curate.

"Because he has given me my own way with such a vengeance. I have been pulling, pulling my hand out of his, and he has let me go, and I lie in the dirt."

"But you have not told me your grounds for concluding so."

"Suppose a child had been crying and fretting after his mother for a spoonful of jam," said the minister, quite gravely, "and at last she set him down to a whole pot—what would you say to that?"

"I should say she meant to give him a sharp lesson, perhaps a reproof as well—certainly not

that she meant to cast him off," answered Wingfold, laughing. "But still I do not understand."

"Have you not heard then? Didn't Dorothy tell you?"

"She has told me nothing."

"Not that my old uncle has left me a hundred thousand pounds and more?"

The curate was on the point of saying, "I am very glad to hear it," when the warning Dorothy had given him returned to his mind, and with it the fear that the pastor was under a delusion—that, as a rich man is sometimes not unnaturally seized with the mania of imagined poverty, so this poor man's mental barometer had, from excess of poverty, turned its index right round again to riches.

"Oh!" he returned, lightly and soothingly, "perhaps it is not so bad as that. You may have been misinformed. There may be some mistake."

"No, no!" returned the minister; "it is true, every word of it. You shall see the lawyers' letter. Dorothy has it, I think. My uncle was an ironmonger in a country town, got on, and

bought a little bit of land in which he found iron. I knew he was flourishing, but he was a churchman and a terrible tory, and I never dreamed he would remember me. There had been no communication between our family and his for many years. He must have fancied me still a flourishing London minister, with a rich wife! If he had had a suspicion of how sorely I needed a few pounds, I cannot believe he would have left me a farthing. He did not save his money to waste it on bread and cheese, I can fancy him saying."

Although a look almost of despair kept coming and going upon his face, he lay so still, and spoke so quietly and collectedly, that Wingfold began to wonder whether there might not be some fact in his statement. He did not well know what to say.

"When I heard the news from Dorothy—she read the letter first," Mr. Drake went on, "—old fool that I was! I was filled with such delight that, although I could not have said whether I believed or not, the very idea of the thing made me weep. Alas! Mr. Wingfold, I have had visions of God in which the whole

world would not have seemed worth a salt tear! And now!——I jumped out of bed, and hurried on my clothes, but by the time I came to kneel at my bedside, God was away. I could not speak a word to him! I had lost the trouble that kept me crying after him like a little child at his mother's heels, the bond was broken, and he was out of sight. I tried to be thankful, but my heart was so full of the money, it lay like a stuffed bag. But I dared not go even to my study till I had prayed. I tramped up and down this little room, thinking more about paying my butcher's bill than anything else. I would give him a silver snuff-box; but as to God and his goodness my heart felt like a stone: I *could not* lift it up. All at once I saw how it was: he had heard my prayers in anger! Mr. Wingfold, the Lord has sent me this money as he sent the quails to the Israelites: while it was yet, as it were, between my teeth, he smote me with hardness of heart. O my God! how shall I live in the world with a hundred thousand pounds instead of my Father in heaven! If it were only that he had hidden his face, I should be able to pray somehow! He has given me

over to the Mammon I was worshipping! Hypocrite that I am! how often have I not pointed out to my people, while yet I dwelt in the land of Goshen, that to fear poverty was the same thing as to love money, for that both came of lack of faith in the living God! Therefore has he taken from me the light of his countenance, which yet, Mr. Wingfold, with all my sins and shortcomings, yea, and my hypocrisy, is the all in all to me!"

He looked the curate in the face with such wild eyes as convinced him that, even if perfectly sane at present, he was in no small danger of losing his reason.

"Then you would willingly give up this large fortune," he said, "and return to your former condition?"

"Rather than not be able to pray—I would! I would!" he cried; then paused and added, "—if only he would give me enough to pay my debts and not have to beg of other people."

Then, with tone suddenly changed to one of agonized effort, with clenched hands, and eyes shut tight, he cried vehemently, as if in the face of a lingering unwillingness to encounter again

the miseries through which he had been passing,

"No, no, Lord! Forgive me. I will not think of conditions. Thy will be done! Take the money and let me be a debtor and a beggar if thou wilt, only let me pray to thee; and do thou make it up to my creditors."

Wingfield's spirit was greatly moved. Here was victory! Whether the fortune was a fact or a fancy, made no feather of difference. He thanked God and took courage. The same instant the door opened, and Dorothy came in, hesitating, and looking strangely anxious. He threw her a face-question. She gently bowed her head, and gave him a letter with a broad black border which she held in her hand.

He read it. No room for rational doubt was left. He folded it softly, gave it back to her, and rising, kneeled down by the bedside, near the foot, and said—

"Father, whose is the fulness of the earth, I thank thee that thou hast set my brother's heel on the neck of his enemy. But the suddenness of thy relief from holy poverty and evil care, has so shaken his heart and brain, or rather, per-

haps, has made him think so keenly of his lack of faith in his Father in heaven, that he fears thou hast thrown him the gift in disdain, as to a dog under the table, though never didst thou disdain a dog, and not given it as to a child, from thy hand into his. Father, let thy spirit come with the gift, or take it again, and make him poor and able to pray."—Here came an *amen*, groaned out as from the bottom of a dungeon.—"Pardon him, father," the curate prayed on, "all his past discontent and the smallness of his faith. Thou art our father, and thou knowest us tenfold better than we know ourselves: we pray thee not only to pardon us, but to make all righteous excuse for us, when we dare not make any for ourselves, for thou art the truth. We will try to be better children. We will go on climbing the mount of God through all the cloudy darkness that swathes it, yea, even in the face of the worst of terrors—that, when we reach the top, we shall find no one there."—Here Dorothy burst into sobs.—"Father!" thus the curate ended his prayer, "take pity on thy children. Thou wilt not give them a piece of bread, in place of a stone—to poison them!

The egg thou givest will not be a serpent's. We are thine, and thou art ours: in us be thy will done! Amen."

As he rose from his knees, he saw that the minister had turned his face to the wall, and lay perfectly still. Rightly judging that he was renewing the vain effort to rouse, by force of the will, feelings which had been stunned by the strange shock, he ventured to try a more authoritative mode of address.

"And now, Mr. Drake, you have got to spend this money," he said, "and the sooner you set about it the better. Whatever may be your ideas about the principal, you are bound to spend at least every penny of the income."

The sad-hearted man stared at the curate.

"How is a man to do anything whom God has forsaken?" he said.

"If he had forsaken you, for as dreary work as it would be, you would have to try to do your duty notwithstanding. But he has not forsaken you. He has given you a very sharp lesson, I grant, and as such you must take it, but that is the very opposite of forsaking you. He has let you know what it is not to trust in

him, and what it would be to have money that did not come from his hand. You did not conquer in the fight with Mammon when you were poor, and God has given you another chance: he expects you to get the better of him now you are rich. If God had forsaken you, I should have found you strutting about, and glorying over imagined enemies."

"Do you really think that is the mind of God towards me?" cried the poor man, starting half up in bed. "*Do* you think so?" he repeated, staring at the curate almost as wildly as at first, but with a different expression.

"I do," said Wingfold; "and it will be a bad job indeed if you fail in both trials. But that I am sure you will not. It is your business now to get this money into your hands as soon as possible, and proceed to spend it."

"Would there be any harm in ordering a few things from the tradespeople?" asked Dorothy.

"How should there be?" returned Wingfold.

"Because, you see," answered Dorothy, "we can't be sure of a bird in the bush."

"Can you be sure of it in your hands? It may spread its wings when you least expect it.

—But Helen will be delighted to take the risk —up to a few hundreds," he added laughing.

"Somebody may dispute the will: they do sometimes," said Dorothy.

"They do very often," answered Wingfold. "It does not look likely in the present case; but our trust must be neither in the will nor in the fortune, but in the living God. You have to get all the *good* out of this money you can. If you will walk over to the rectory with me now, while your father gets up, we will carry the good news to my wife, and she will lend you what money you like, so that you need order nothing without paying for it."

"Please ask her not to tell anybody," said Mr. Drake. "I shouldn't like it talked about before I understand it myself."

"You are quite right. If I were you I would tell nobody yet but Mr. Drew. He is a right man, and will help you to bear your good fortune. I have always found good fortune harder to bear than bad."

Dorothy ran to put her bonnet on. The curate went back to the bedside. Mr. Drake had again turned his face to the wall.

"Sixty years of age!" he was murmuring to himself.

"Mr. Drake," said Wingfold, "so long as you bury yourself with the centipedes in your own cellar, instead of going out into God's world, you are tempting Satan and Mammon together to come and tempt you. Worship the God who made the heaven and the earth, and the sea and the mines of iron and gold, by doing his will in the heart of them. Don't worship the poor picture of him you have got hanging up in your closet;—worship the living power beyond your ken. Be strong in him whose is your strength, and all strength. Help him in his work with his own. Give life to his gold. Rub the canker off it, by sending it from hand to hand. You must rise and bestir yourself. I will come and see you again to-morrow. Good-bye for the present."

He turned away and walked from the room. But his hand had scarcely left the lock, when he heard the minister alight from his bed upon the floor.

"He'll do!" said the curate to himself, and walked down the stair.

When he got home, he left Dorothy with his wife, and going to his study, wrote the following verses, which had grown in his mind as he walked silent beside her :—

WHAT MAN IS THERE OF YOU ?

The homely words, how often read !
How seldom fully known !
" Which father of you, asked for bread,
Would give his son a stone ?"

How oft has bitter tear been shed,
And heaved how many a groan,
Because thou wouldst not give for bread
The thing that was a stone !

How oft the child thou wouldst have fed,
Thy gift away has thrown !
He prayed, thou heardst, and gav'st the bread :
He cried, it is a stone !

Lord, if I ask in doubt and dread
Lest I be left to moan—
I am the man who, asked for bread,
Would give his son a stone.

As Dorothy returned from the rectory, where Helen had made her happier than all the money by the kind words she said to her, she stopped at Mr. Jones's shop, and bought of him a bit of loin of mutton.

" Shan't I put it down, miss ?" he suggested, seeing her take out her purse.—Helen had just

given her the purse: they had had great fun, with both tears and laughter, over it.

"I would rather not—thank you very much," she replied, with a smile.

He gave her a kind, searching glance, and took the money.

That day Juliet dined with them. When the joint appeared, Amanda, who had been in the kitchen the greater part of the morning, clapped her hands as at sight of an old acquaintance.

"Dere it comes! dere it comes!" she cried.

But the minister's grace was a little longer than she liked, for he was trying hard to feel grateful. I think some people mistake pleasure and satisfaction for thankfulness: Mr. Drake was not so to be taken in. Ere long, however, he found them a good soil for thankfulness to grow in.—So Amanda fidgeted not a little, and the moment the grace was over—

"Now 'en! now 'en!" she almost screamed, her eyes sparkling with delight. "'Iss is dinner!—'Ou don't have dinner every day, Miss Mellydif!"

"Be quiet, Ducky," said her aunt, as she

called her. "You mustn't make any remarks."

"Ducky ain't makin' no marks," returned the child, looking anxiously at the table-cloth, and was quiet, but not for long.

"Lisbef say surely papa's sip come home wif 'e nice dinner!" she said next.

"No, my ducky," said Mr. Drake; "it was God's ship that came with it."

"Dood sip!" said the child.

"It will come one day and another, and carry us all home," said the minister.

"Where Ducky's yeal own papa and mamma yive in a big house, papa?" asked Amanda, more seriously.

"I will tell you more about it when you are older," said Mr. Drake. "Now let us eat the dinner God has sent us."

He was evidently far happier already, though his daughter could see that every now and then his thoughts were away: she hoped they were thanking God. Before dinner was over, he was talking quite cheerfully, drawing largely from his stores both of reading and experience. After the child was gone, they told Juliet of their

good fortune. She congratulated them heartily, then looked a little grave, and said—

"Perhaps you would like me to go?"

"What!" said Mr. Drake; "does your friendship go no farther than that? Having helped us so much in adversity, will you forsake us the moment prosperity looks in at the window?"

Juliet gave one glance at Dorothy, smiled, and said no more. For Dorothy, she was already building a castle for Juliet—busily.

CHAPTER III.

JULIET'S CHAMBER.

AFTER tea, Mr. Drake and Dorothy went out for a walk together—a thing they had not once done since the church-meeting of acrid memory in which had been decreed the close of the minister's activity, at least in Glaston. It was a lovely June twilight; the bats were flitting about like the children of the gloamin', and the lamps of the laburnum and lilac hung dusky among the trees of Osterfield Park.

Juliet, left all but alone in the house, sat at her window, reading. Her room was on the first floor, but the dining-room beneath it was of low pitch, and at the lane-door there were two steps down into the house, so that her window was at no great height above the lane. It was open, but there was little to be seen

from it, for immediately opposite rose a high old garden-wall, hiding every thing with its gray bulk, lovelily blotted with lichens and moss, brown and green and gold, except the wall-flowers and stone-crop that grew on its coping, and a running plant that hung down over it, like a long fringe worn thin. Had she put her head out of the window, she would have seen in the one direction a cow-house, and in the other the tall narrow iron gate of the garden—and that was all. The twilight deepened as she read, until the words before her began to play hide and seek; they got worse and worse, until she was tired of catching at them; and when at last she stopped for a moment, they were all gone like a troop of fairies, and her reading was ended. She closed the book, and was soon dreaming awake; and the twilight world was the globe in which the dream-fishes came and went—now swelling up strange and near, now sinking away into the curious distance.

Her mood was broken by the sound of hoofs, which she almost immediately recognized as those of the doctor's red horse—great hoofs

falling at the end of long straight-flung steps. Her heart began to beat violently, and confident in the protection of the gathering night, she rose and looked cautiously out towards the side on which was the approach. In a few moments, round the farthest visible corner, and past the gate in the garden-wall, swung a huge shadowy form—gigantic in the dusk. She drew back her head, but ere she could shape her mind to retreat from the window, the solid gloom hurled itself thundering past, and she stood trembling and lonely, with the ebb of Ruber's paces in her ears—and in her hand a letter. In a minute she came to herself, closed her window, drew down the blind, lit a candle, set it on the window-sill, and opened the letter. It contained these verses, and nothing more:—

My morning rose in laughter—
A gold and azure day.
Dull clouds came trooping after,
Livid, and sullen gray.

At noon, the rain did batter.
And it thundered like a hell:
I sighed, It is no matter,
At night I shall sleep as well.

But I longed with a madness tender
For an evening like the morn,

That my day might die in splendour,
Not folded in mist forlorn—

Die like a tone elysian,
Like a bee in a cactus-flower,
Like a day-surprised vision,
Like a wind in a summer shower.

Through the vaulted clouds about me
Broke trembling an azure space:
Was it a dream to flout me—
Or was it a perfect face?

The sky and the face together
Are gone, and the wind blows fell.
But what matters a dream or the weather?
At night it will all be well.

For the day of life and labour,
Of ecstasy and pain,
Is only a beaten tabor,
And I shall not dream again.

But as the old Night steals o'er me,
Deepening till all is dead,
I shall see thee still before me
Stand with averted head.

And I shall think, Ah sorrow!
The *might* that never was *may!*
The night that has no morrow!
And the sunset all in gray!

Juliet laid her head on her hands and wept.

"Why should I not let him have his rosy sunset?" she thought. "It is all he hopes for—cares for, I think—poor fellow! Am I not good enough to give him that? What does it

matter about me, if it is all but a vision that flits between heaven and earth, and makes a passing shadow on human brain and nerves?—a tale that is telling—then a tale that is told! Much the good people make out of their better faith! Should *I* be troubled to learn that it was indeed a lasting sleep? If I were dead, and found myself waking, should I want to rise, or to go to sleep again? Why should not I too dare to hope for an endless rest? Where would be the wrong to any? If there be a God, he will have but to wake me to punish me hard enough. Why should I not hope at least for such a lovely thing? Can any one help desiring peace? Oh, to sleep, and sleep, and wake no more for ever and ever! I would not hasten the sleep; the end will surely come, and why should we not enjoy the dream a little longer—at least while it is a good dream, and the tossing has not begun? There would always be a time. Why wake before our time out of the day into the dark nothing? I should always want to see what to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow would bring—that is, so long as he loved me. He is noble, and sad,

and beautiful, and gracious!—but would he—could he love me to the end—even if—?—Why should we not make the best of what we have? Why should we not make life as happy to ourselves and to others as we can—however worthless, however arrant a cheat it may be? Even if there be no such thing as love, if it be all but a lovely vanity, a bubble play of colour, why not let the bubble-globe swell, and the tide of its ocean of colour flow and rush and mingle and change? Will it not break at last, and the last come soon enough, when of all the glory is left but a tear on the grass? When we dream a pleasant dream, and know it is but a dream, we will to dream on, and quiet our minds that it may not be scared and flee: why should we not yield to the stronger dream, that it may last yet another sweet, beguiling moment? Why should he not love me—kiss me? Why should we not be sad together, that we are not and cannot be the real man and woman we would—that we are but the forms of a dream—the fleeting shadows of the night of Nature?—mourn together that the meddlesome hand of fate should have roused us to consciousness and

aspiration so long before the maturity of our powers that we are but a laughter—no—a scorn and a weeping to ourselves? We could at least sympathize with each other in our common misery—bear with its weaknesses, comfort its regrets, hide its mortifications, cherish its poor joys, and smooth the way down the steepening slope to the grave! Then, if in the decrees of blind fate, there should be a slow, dull procession towards perfection, if indeed some human God be on the way to be born, it would be grand, although we should know nothing of it, to have done our part fearless and hopeless, to have lived and died that the triumphant Sorrow might sit throned on the ever dying heart of the universe. But never, never would I have chosen to live for that!—Yes, one might choose to be born, if there were suffering one might live or die to soften, to cure! That would be to be like Paul Faber. To will to be born for that would be grand indeed!"

In paths of thought like these her mind wandered, her head lying upon her arms on the old-fashioned, wide-spread window-sill. At

length, weary with emotion and weeping, she fell fast asleep, and slept for some time.

The house was very still. Mr. Drake and Dorothy were in no haste to return. Amanda was asleep, and Lisbeth was in the kitchen—perhaps also asleep.

Juliet woke with a great start. Arms were around her from behind, lifting her from her half-prone position of sorrowful rest. With a terrified cry, she strove to free herself.

"Juliet, my love! my heart! be still, and let me speak," said Faber. His voice trembled as if full of tears. "I can bear this no longer. You are my fate. I never lived till I knew you. I shall cease to live when I know for certain that you turn from me."

Juliet was like one half-drowned, just lifted from the water, struggling to beat it away from eyes and ears and mouth.

"Pray leave me, Mr. Faber," she cried, half terrified, half bewildered, as she rose and turned towards him. But while she pushed him away with one hand, she unconsciously clasped his arm tight with the other. "You have

no right to come into my room, and surprise me—startle me so! Do go away. I will come to you."

"Pardon, pardon, my angel! Do not speak so loud," he said, falling on his knees, and clasping hers.

"Do go away," persisted Juliet, trying to remove his grasp. "What will they think if they find us—you here? They know I am perfectly well."

"You drive me to liberties that make me tremble, Juliet. Everywhere you avoid me. You are never to be seen without some hateful protector. Ages ago I put up a prayer to you—one of life or death to me, and, like the God you believe in, you have left it unanswered. You have no pity on the sufferings you cause me! If your God *be* cruel, why should you be cruel too? Is not one tormentor enough in your universe? If there be a future, let us go on together to find it. If there be not, let us yet enjoy what of life may be enjoyed. My past is a sad one——"

Juliet shuddered.

"Ah, my beautiful, you too have suffered!"

he went on. "Let us be angels of mercy to each other, each helping the other to forget! My griefs I should count worthless if I might but erase yours."

"I would I could say the same!" said Juliet, but only in her heart.

"Whatever they may have been," he continued, "my highest ambition shall be to make you forget them. We will love like beings whose only eternity is the moment. Come with me, Juliet; we will go down into the last darkness together, loving each other—and then peace. At least there is no eternal hate in my poor, ice-cold religion, as there is in yours. I am not suffering alone, Juliet. All whom it is my work to relieve, are suffering from your unkindness. For a time I prided myself that I gave every one of them as full attention as before, but I cannot keep it up. I am defeated. My brain seems deserting me. I mistake symptoms, forget cases, confound medicines, fall into incredible blunders. My hand trembles, my judgment wavers, my will is undecided. Juliet, you are ruining me."

"He saved my life," said Juliet to herself,

"and that it is which has brought him to this. He has a claim to me. I am his property. He found me a castaway on the shore of Death, and gave me *his* life to live with. He must not suffer where I can prevent it."—She was on the point of yielding.

The same moment she heard a step in the lane approaching the door.

"If you love me, do go now, dear Mr. Faber," she said. "I will see you again. Do not urge me farther to-night.—Ah, I wish! I wish!" she added, with a deep sigh, and ceased.

The steps came up to the door. There came a knock at it. They heard Lisbeth go to open it. Faber rose.

"Go into the drawing-room," said Juliet. "Lisbeth may be coming to fetch me; she must not see you here."

He obeyed. Without a word he left the chamber, and went into the drawing-room. He had been hardly a moment there, when Wingfold entered. It was almost dark, but the doctor stood against the window, and the curate knew him.

"Ah, Faber!" he said, "it is long since I saw you. But each has been about his work, I suppose, and there could not be a better reason."

"Under different masters, then," returned Faber, a little out of temper.

"I don't exactly think so. All good work is done under the same master."

"Pooh! pooh!"

"Who is your master, then?"

"My conscience. Who is yours?"

"The author of my conscience."

"A legendary personage!"

"One who is every day making my conscience harder upon me. Until I believed in him, my conscience was dull and stupid—not half awake, indeed."

"Oh! I see! You mean my conscience is dull and stupid."

"I do not. But if you were once lighted up with the light of the world, you would pass just such a judgment on yourself. I can't think you so different from myself, as that that shouldn't be the case; though most heartily I grant you do your work ten times better than I did. And

all the time I thought myself an honest man! I wasn't. A man may honestly think himself honest, and a fresh week's experience make him doubt it altogether. I sorely want a God to make me honest."

Here Juliet entered the room, greeted Mr. Wingfold, and then shook hands with Faber. He was glad the room was dark.

"What do you think, Miss Meredith—is a man's conscience enough for his guidance?" said the curate.

"I don't know anything about a man's conscience," answered Juliet.

"A woman's then?" said the curate.

"What else has she got?" returned Juliet.

The doctor was inwardly cursing the curate for talking shop. Only, if a man knows nothing so good, so beautiful, so necessary, as the things in his shop, what else ought he to talk—especially if he is ready to give them without money and without price? The doctor would have done better to talk shop too.

"Of course he has nothing else," answered the curate; "and if he had, he must follow his conscience all the same."

"There you are, Wingfold!—always talking paradoxes!" said Faber.

"Why, man! you may only have a blundering boy to guide you, but if he is your only guide, you must follow him. You don't therefore call him a sufficient guide!"

"What a logomachist you are! If it is a horn lantern you've got, you needn't go mocking at it."

"The lantern is not the light. Perhaps you cannot change your horn for glass, but what if you could better the light? Suppose the boy's father knew all about the country, but you never thought it worth while to send the lad to him for instructions?"

"Suppose I didn't believe he had a father? Suppose he told me he hadn't?"

"Some men would call out to know if there was anybody in the house to give the boy a useful hint."

"Oh bother! I'm quite content with my fellow."

"Well, for my part I should count my conscience, were it ten times better than it is, poor company on any journey. Nothing less than

the living Truth ever with me can make existence a peace to me.—That's the joy of the Holy Ghost, Miss Meredith.—What if you should find one day, Faber, that, of all facts, the thing you had been so coolly refusing was the most precious and awful?"

Faber had had more than enough of it. There was but one thing precious to him: Juliet was the perfect flower of nature, the apex of law, the last presentment of evolution, the final reason of things! The very soul of the world stood there in the dusk, and there also stood the foolish curate, whirling his little vortex of dust and ashes between him and her!

"It comes to this," said Faber: "what you say moves nothing in me. I am aware of no need, no want of that being of whom you speak. Surely if in him I did live and move and have my being, as some old heathen taught your Saul of Tarsus, I should in one mode or another be aware of him!"

While he spoke, Mr. Drake and Dorothy had come into the room. They stood silent.

"That is a weighty word," said Wingfold.

"But what if you feel his presence every moment, only do not recognize it as such?"

"Where would be the good of it to me, then?"

"The good of it to you might lie in the blinding. What if any further revelation to one who did not seek it would but obstruct the knowledge of him? Truly revealed, the word would be read untruly—even as The Word has been read by many in all ages. Only the pure in heart, we are told, shall see him. The man who, made by him, does not desire him—how should he know him?"

"Why don't I desire him, then?—I don't."

"That is for you to find out."

"I do what I know to be right: even on your theory I ought to get on," said Faber, turning from him with a laugh.

"I think so too," replied Wingfold. "Go on, and prosper. Only, if there be untruth in you alongside of the truth,—? It might be, and you not awake to it. It is marvellous what things can co-exist in a human mind."

"In that case, why should not your God help me?"

"Why not? I think he will. But it may *have* to be in a way you will not like."

"Well, well! good night. Talk is but talk, whatever be the subject of it.—I beg your pardon," he added, shaking hands with the minister and his daughter; "I did not see you come in. Good night."

"I won't allow that talk is only talk, Faber," Wingfold called after him with a friendly laugh. Then turning to Mr. Drake, "Pardon me," he said, "for treating you with so much confidence. I saw you come in, but believed you would rather have us end our talk than break it off."

"Certainly. But I can't help thinking you grant him too much, Mr. Wingfold," said the minister seriously.

"I never find I lose by giving, even in argument," said the curate. "Faber rides his hobby well, but the brute is a sorry jade. He will find one day she has not a sound joint in her whole body."

The man who is anxious to hold every point, will speedily bring a question to a mere dispute about trifles, leaving the real matter, whose

elements may appeal to the godlike in every man, out in the cold. Such a man, having gained his paltry point, will crow like the bantam he is, while the other, who may be the greater, perhaps the better man, although in the wrong, is embittered by his smallness, and turns away with increased prejudice. Human nature can hardly be blamed for its readiness to impute to the case the shallowness of its pleader. Few men do more harm than those who, taking the right side, dispute for personal victory, and argue, as they are sure then to do, ungenerously. But even genuine argument for the truth is not preaching the gospel, neither is he whose unbelief is thus assailed, likely to be brought thereby into any mood but one unfit for receiving it. Argument should be kept to books; preachers ought to have nothing to do with it—at all events in the pulpit. There let them hold forth light, and let him who will, receive it, and him who will not, forbear. God alone can convince, and till the full time is come for the birth of the truth in a soul, the words of even the Lord himself are not there potent.

"The man irritates me, I confess," said Mr. Drake. "I do not say he is self-satisfied, but he is very self-sufficient."

"He is such a good fellow," said Wingfold, "that I think God will not let him go on like this very long. I think we shall live to see a change upon him. But much as I esteem and love the man, I cannot help a suspicion that he has a great lump of pride somewhere about him, which has not a little to do with his denials."

Juliet's blood seemed seething in her veins as she heard her lover thus weighed, and talked over; and therewith came the first rift of a threatened breach betwixt her heart and the friends who had been so good to her. He had done far more for her than any of them, and mere loyalty seemed to call upon her to defend him; but she did not know how, and, dissatisfied with herself as well as indignant with them, she maintained an angry silence.

CHAPTER IV.

OSTERFIELD PARK.

IT was a long time since Mr. Drake and Dorothy had had such a talk together, or had spent such a pleasant evening as that on which they went into Osterfield Park, to be alone with the knowledge of their changed fortunes. The anxiety of each, differing so greatly from that of the other, had tended to shut up each in loneliness beyond the hearing of the other; so that, while there was no breach in their love, it was yet in danger of having long to endure

> "an expansion,
> Like gold to airy thinness beat."

But this evening their souls rushed together. The father's anxiety was chiefly elevated; the daughter's remained much what it was before;

yet these anxieties no longer availed to keep them apart.

Each relation of life has its peculiar beauty of holiness; but that beauty is the expression of its essential truth, and the essence itself is so strong that it bestows upon its embodiment even the power of partial metamorphosis with all other vital relations. How many daughters have in the devotion of their tenderness, become as mothers to their own fathers! Who has not known some sister more of a wife to a man than she for whose sake he neglected her? But it will take the loves of all the relations of life gathered in one, to shadow the love which, in the kingdom of heaven, is recognized as due to each from each human being *per se*. It is for the sake of the essential human, that all human relations and all forms of them exist—that we may learn what it is, and become capable of loving it aright.

Dorothy would now have been as a mother to her father, had she had but a good hope, if no more, of finding her Father in heaven. She was not at peace enough to mother anybody. She had indeed a grasp of the skirt of his robe

—only she could not be sure it was not the mere fringe of a cloud she held. Not the less was her father all her care, and pride, and joy. Of his faults she saw none: there was enough of the noble and generous in him to hide them from a less partial beholder than a daughter. They had never been serious in comparison with his virtues. I do not mean that every fault is not so serious that a man must be willing to die twenty deaths to get rid of it; but that, relatively to the getting rid of it, a fault is serious or not, in proportion to the depths of its root, rather than the amount of its foliage. Neither can that be the worst-conditioned fault, the man's own suspicion of which would make him hang his head in shame; those are his worst faults which a man will start up to defend; those are the most dangerous moral diseases whose symptoms are regarded as the signs of health.

Like lovers they walked out together, with eyes only for each other, for the good news had made them shy—through the lane, into the cross street, and out into Pine-street, along which they went westward, meeting the gaze

of the low sun, which wrapt them round in a veil of light and dark, for the light made their eyes dark, so that they seemed feeling their way out of the light into the shadow.

"This is like life," said the pastor, looking down at the precious face beside him: "our eyes can best see from under the shadow of afflictions."

"I would rather it were from under the shadow of God's wings," replied Dorothy, timidly.

"So it is! so it is! Afflictions are but the shadow of his wings," said her father eagerly. "Keep there, my child, and you will never need the afflictions I have needed. I have been a hard one to save."

But the child thought within herself, "Alas, father! you have never had any afflictions which you or I either could not bear tenfold better than what I have to bear." She was perhaps right. Only she did not know that when she got through, all would be transfigured with the light of her resurrection, just as her father's poverty now was in the light of his plenty.

Little more passed between them in the

street. All the way to the entrance of the park they were silent. There they exchanged a few words with the sweet-faced little dwarf-woman that opened the gate, and those few words set the currents of their thoughts singing yet more sweetly as they flowed. They entered the great park, through the trees that bordered it, still in silence, but when they reached the wide expanse of grass, with its clumps of trees and thickets, simultaneously they breathed a deep breath of the sweet wind, and the fountains of their deeps were broken up. The evening was lovely, they wandered about long in delight, and much was the trustful converse they held. It was getting dark before they thought of returning.

The father had been telling the daughter how he had mourned and wept when his boys were taken from him, never thinking at all of the girl who was left him.

"And now," he said, "I would not part with my Dorothy to have them back the finest boys in the world. What would my old age be without you, my darling?"

Dorothy's heart beat high. Surely there

must be a Father in heaven too! They walked a while in a great silence, for the heart of each was full. And all the time scarce an allusion had been made to the money.

As they returned they passed the new house, at some distance, on the highest point in the park. It stood unfinished, with all its windows boarded up.

"The walls of that house," said Mr. Drake, "were scarcely above ground when I came to Glaston. So they had been for twenty years, and so they remained until, as you remember, the building was recommenced some three or four years ago. Now, again, it is forsaken, and only the wind is at home in it."

"They tell me the estate is for sale," said Dorothy. "Those building-lots, just where the lane leads into Pine-street, I fancy belong to it."

"I wish," returned her father, "they would sell me that tumble-down place in the hollow they call the Old House of Glaston. I shouldn't mind paying a good sum for it. What a place it would be to live in! And what a pleasure there would be in the making of it once more

habitable, and watching order dawn out of neglect!"

"It would be delightful," responded Dorothy. "When I was a child, it was one of my dreams that that house was my papa's—with the wild garden and all the fruit, and the terrible lake, and the ghost of the lady that goes about in the sack she was drowned in. But would you really buy it, father, if you could get it?"

"I think I should, Dorothy," answered Mr. Drake.

"Would it not be damp—so much in the hollow? Is it not the lowest spot in the park?"

"In the park—yes; for the park drains into it. But the park lies high; and you must note that the lake, deep as it is—very deep, yet drains into the Lythe. For all they say of no bottom to it, I am nearly sure the deepest part of the lake is higher than the surface of the river. If I am right, then we could, if we pleased, empty the lake altogether—not that I should like the place nearly so well without it. The situation is charming—and so sheltered!—

looking full south—just the place to keep open house in!"

"That is just like you, father!" cried Dorothy, clapping her hands once and holding them together as she looked up at him. "The very day you are out of prison, you want to begin to keep an open house!—Dear father!"

"Don't mistake me, my darling. There was a time, long ago, after your mother was good enough to marry me, when—I am ashamed to confess it even to you, my child—I did enjoy making a show. I wanted people to see, that, although I was the minister of a sect looked down upon by the wealthy priests of a worldly establishment, I knew how to live after the world's fashion as well as they. That time you will scarcely recall, Dorothy?"

"I remember the coachman's buttons," answered Dorothy.

"Well! I suppose it will be the same with not a few times and circumstances we may try to recall in the other world. Some insignificant thing will be all, and fittingly too, by which we shall be able to identify them.—I liked to give nice dinner parties, and we returned every invi

tation we accepted. I took much pains to have good wines, and the right wines with the right dishes, and all that kind of thing—though I daresay I made more blunders than I knew. Your mother had been used to that way of living, and it was no show in her as it was in me. Then I was proud of my library and the rare books in it. I delighted in showing them, and talking over the rarity of this edition, the tallness of that copy, the binding, and such-like follies. And where was the wonder, seeing I served religion so much in the same way—descanting upon the needlework that clothed the king's daughter, instead of her inward glory! I do not say always, for I had my better times. But how often have I not insisted on the mint and anise and cummin, and forgotten the judgment, mercy, and faith! How many sermons have I not preached about the latchets of Christ's shoes, when I might have been talking about Christ himself! But now I do not want a good house to make a show with any more: I want to be hospitable. I don't call giving dinners being hospitable. I would have my house a hiding-place from the

wind, a covert from the tempest. That would be to be hospitable. Ah! if your mother were with us, my child! But you will be my little wife, as you have been for so many years now. —God keeps open house; I should like to keep open house.—I wonder does anybody ever preach hospitality as a Christian duty?"

"I hope you won't keep a butler, and set up for grand, father," said Dorothy.

"Indeed I will not, my child. I would not run the risk of postponing the pleasure of the Lord to that of inhospitable servants. I will look to you to keep a warm, comfortable, welcoming house, and such servants only as shall be hospitable in heart and behaviour, and make no difference between the poor and the rich."

"I can't feel that anybody is poor," said Dorothy, after a pause, "except those that can't be sure of God.—They are so poor!" she added.

"You are right, my child!" returned her father. "It was not my poverty—it was not being sure of God that crushed me.—How long is it since I was poor, Dorothy?"

"Two days, father—not two till to-morrow morning."

"It looks to me two centuries. My mind is at ease, and I have not paid a debt yet! How vile of me to want the money in my own hand, and not be content it should be in God's pocket, to come out just as it was wanted! Alas! I have more faith in my uncle's leavings than in my Father's generosity! But I must not forget gratitude in shame. Come, my child —no one can see us—let us kneel down here on the grass, and pray to God who is in yon star just twinkling through the gray, and in my heart and in yours, my child."

I will not give the words of the minister's prayer. The words are not the prayer. Mr. Drake's words were commonplace, with much of the conventionality and platitude of prayer-meetings. He had always objected to the formality of the Prayer-book, but the words of his own prayers without book were far more formal: the prayer itself was in the heart, not on the lips, and was far better than the words. But poor Dorothy heard only the words, and they did not help her. They seemed rather to

freeze than revive her faith, making her feel as if she never could believe in the God of her father. She was too unhappy to reason well, or she might have seen that she was not bound to measure God by the way her father talked to him—that the form of the prayer had to do with her father, not immediately with God—that God might be altogether adorable, notwithstanding the prayers of all heathens and of all saints.

Their talk turned again upon the Old House of Glaston.

"If it be true, as I have heard ever since I came," said Mr. Drake, "that Lord de Barre means to pull down the house and plough up the garden, and if he be so short of money as they say, he might perhaps take a few thousands for it. The Lythe bounds the estate, and there makes a great loop, so that a portion might be cut off by a straight line from one arm of the curve to the other, which would be quite outside the park. I will set some inquiry on foot. I have wished for a long time to leave the river, only we had a lease. The Old House is nothing like so low as the one we

are in now. Besides, as I propose, we should have space to build, if we found it desirable, on the level of the park."

When they reached the gate on their return, a second dwarfish figure, a man, pigeon-chested, short-necked, and asthmatic—a strange, gnome-like figure, came from the lodge to open it. Everybody in Glaston knew Polwarth the gate-keeper.

"How is the asthma to-night, Mr. Polwarth?" said the pastor. He had not yet got rid of the tone in which in his young days he had been accustomed to address the poor of his flock—a tone half familiar, half condescending. To big ships barnacles will stick—and may add weeks to the length of a voyage too.

"Not very bad, thank you, Mr. Drake. But, bad or not, it is always a friendly devil," answered the little man.

"I am ast—— a little surprised to hear you use such——express yourself so, Mr. Polwarth," said the minister.

The little man laughed a quiet, huskily melodious, gently merry laugh.

"I am not original in the idea, and scarcely

so in my way of expressing it. I am sorry you don't like it, Mr. Drake," he said. "I found it in the second epistle to the Corinthians last night, and my heart has been full of it ever since. It is surely no very bad sign if the truth should make us merry at a time! It ought to do so, I think, seeing merriment is one of the lower forms of bliss."

"I am at a loss to understand you, Mr. Polwarth," said the minister.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Drake. I will come to the point. In the passage I refer to, St. Paul says: 'There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure;'—am I not right in speaking of such a demon as a friendly one? He was a gift from God."

"I had not observed—that is, I had not taken particular notice of the unusual combination of phrases in the passage," answered Mr. Drake. "It is a very remarkable one, certainly. I remember no other in which a messenger of Satan is spoken of as being *given* by God."

"Clearly, sir, St. Paul accepted him as something to be grateful for, so soon as his

mission was explained to him; and after that, who is to say what may not be a gift of God! It won't do to grumble at anything—will it, sir?—when it may so unexpectedly turn out to be *given* to us by God. I begin to suspect that never, until we see a thing plainly a gift of God, can we be sure that we see it right. I am quite certain the most unpleasant things may be such gifts. I should be glad enough to part with this asthma of mine, if it pleased God it should depart from me; but would I yield a fraction of what it has brought me, for the best lungs in England? I trow not!"

"You are a happy man, Mr. Polwarth—if you can say that and abide by it."

"I *am* a happy man, sir. I don't know what would come of me sometimes, for very gladness, if I hadn't my good friend, the asthma-devil, to keep me down a bit.—Good night, sir," he added, for Mr. Drake was already moving away.

He felt superior to this man, set him down as forward, did not quite approve of him. Always ready to judge involuntarily from externals, he would have been shocked to discover how much the deformity of the man, which caused him

discomfort, prejudiced him also against him. Then Polwarth seldom went to a place of worship, and when he did, went to church! A cranky, visionary, talkative man, he was in Mr. Drake's eyes. He set him down as one of those mystical interpreters of the word, who are always searching it for strange things, whose very insight leads them to vagary, blinding them to the relative value of things. It is amazing from what a mere fraction of fact concerning him, a man will dare judge the whole of another man. In reality, little Polwarth could have carried big Drake to the top of any hill Difficulty, up which, in his spiritual pilgrimage, he had yet had to go panting and groaning—and to the top of many another besides, within sight even of which the minister would never come in this world.

"He is too ready with his spiritual experience, that little man!—too fond of airing it," said the minister to his daughter. "I don't quite know what to make of him. He is a favourite with Mr. Wingfold; but my experience makes me doubtful. I suspect prodigies."

Now Polwarth was not in the habit of airing

his religious experiences; but all Glaston could see that the minister was in trouble, and he caught at the first opportunity he had of showing his sympathy with him, offering him a share of the comfort he had just been receiving himself. He smiled at its apparent rejection, and closed the gate softly, saying to himself that the good man would think of it yet, he was sure.

Dorothy took little interest in Polwarth, little therefore in her father's judgment of him. But, better even than Wingfold himself, that poor physical failure of a man could have helped her from under every gravestone that was now crushing the life out of her—not so much from superiority of intellect—certainly not from superiority of learning, but mainly because he was alive all through, because the life eternal pervaded every atom of his life, every thought, every action. Door nor window of his being had a lock to it! All of them were always on the swing to the wind that bloweth where it listeth. Upon occasions when most would seek refuge from the dark sky and gusty weather of trouble, by hiding from the messen-

gers of Satan in the deepest cellar of their hearts, there to sit grumbling, Polwarth always went out into the open air. If the wind was rough, there was none the less life in it: the breath of God, it was rough to blow the faults from him, genial to put fresh energy in him; if the rain fell, it was the water of cleansing and growth. Misfortune he would not know by that name: there was no *mis* but in himself, and that the messenger of Satan was there to buffet. So long as God was, all was right. No wonder the minister then was incapable of measuring the gate-keeper! But Polwarth was right about him—as he went home he pondered the passage to which he had referred him, wondering whether he was to regard the fortune sent him as a messenger of Satan given to buffet him.

CHAPTER V.

THE SURGERY DOOR.

THAT Juliet loved Faber as she had at one time resolved never to love man, she no longer attempted to conceal from herself; but she was far from being prepared to confess the discovery to him. His atheism she satisfactorily justified herself in being more ready to pity than to blame. There were difficulties! There were more than difficulties! Not a few of them she did not herself see how to get over! If her father had been alive, then indeed!—children must not break their parents' hearts. But if, as *appeared* the most likely thing, that father, tenderly as she had loved him, was gone from her for ever, if life was but a flash across from birth to the grave, why should not those who loved make the best of it for each other during

that one moment "brief as the lightning in the collied night"? They must try to be the more to one another, that the time was so short. All that Faber had ever pleaded was now blossoming at once in her thought. She had not a doubt that he loved her—as would have been enough once at all events. A man of men he was!—noble, unselfish, independent, a ruler of himself, a benefactor of his race! What right had those *believers* to speak of him as they did! In any personal question he was far their superior. That they undervalued him, came all of their narrow prejudices! He was not of their kind, therefore he must be below them! But there were first that should be last, and last first!

She felt herself no whit worthy of him. She believed herself not for a moment comparable to him. But his infinite chivalry, gentleness, compassion, would be her refuge! Such a man would bear with her weaknesses, love her love, and forgive her sins! If he took her God from her, he must take his place, and be a God-like man to her! Then, if there should be any farther truth discoverable, why indeed, as himself

said, should they not discover it together? Could they be as likely to discover it apart, and distracted with longing? She must think about it a little longer though. She could not make up her mind the one way, and would not the other. She would wait and see. She dared not yet. Something might turn up to decide her. If she could but see into his heart for a moment!

All this later time, she had been going to church every Sunday, and listening to sermons in which the curate poured out the energy of a faith growing stronger day by day; but not a word he said had as yet laid hold of one root-fibre of her being. She judged, she accepted, she admired, she refused, she condemned, but she never *did*. To many souls hell itself seems a less frightful alternative than the agony of resolve, of turning, of being born again; but Juliet had never got so far as that: she had never yet looked the thing required of her in the face. She came herself to wonder that she had made any stand at all against the arguments of Faber. But how is it that any one who has been educated in Christianity, yet does

not become the disciple of Jesus Christ, avoids becoming an atheist? To such the old thing must look so unlike what it really is! Does he prefer to keep half believing the revelation, in order to attribute to it elements altogether unlovely, and so justify himself in refusing it? Were it not better to reject it altogether if it be not fit to be believed in? If he be unable to do that, if he dare not proclaim an intellectual unbelief, if some reverence for father or mother, some inward drawing towards the good thing, some desire to keep an open door of escape, prevent, what a hideous folly is the moral disregard! "The thing is true, but I don't mind it!" What is this acknowledged heedlessness, this apologetic arrogance? Is it a timid mockery, or a putting forth of the finger in the very face of the Life of the world? I know well how foolish words like these must seem to such as Faber, but for such they are not written; they are written for the men and women who close the lids of but half-blinded eyes, and think they do God service by not denying that there is a sun in the heavens. There may be some denying Christ who shall fare better than they,

when he comes to judge the world with a judgment which even those whom he sends from him shall confess to be absolutely fair—a judgment whose very righteousness may be a consolation to some upon whom it falls heavily.

That night Juliet hardly knew what she had said to Faber, and longed to see him again. She slept little, and in the morning was weary and exhausted. But he had set her the grand example of placing work before everything else, and she would do as he taught her. So, in the name of her lover, and in spite of her headache, she rose to her day's duty. Love delights to put on the livery of the loved.

After breakfast, as was their custom, Dorothy walked with her to the place where she gave her first lesson. The nearest way led past the house of the doctor; but hitherto, as often as she could frame fitting reason, generally on the ground that they were too early, and must make a little longer walk of it, Juliet had contrived to avoid turning the corner of Mr. Drew's shop. This day, however, she sought no excuse, and they went the natural road. She wanted

to pass his house—to get a glimpse of him if she might.

As they approached it, they were startled by a sudden noise of strife. The next instant the door of the surgery, which was a small building connected with the house by a passage, flew open, and a young man was shot out. He half jumped, half fell down the six or eight steps, turned at once, and ran up again. He had rather a refined look, notwithstanding the annoyance and resentment that discomposed his features. The mat had caught the door, and he was just in time to prevent it from being shut in his face.

"I will *not* submit to such treatment, Mr. Faber," cried the youth. "It is not the part of a gentleman to forget that another is one."

"To the devil with your *gentleman!*" they heard the doctor shout in a rage, from behind the half closed door. "The less said about the gentleman the better, when the man is nowhere!"

"Mr. Faber, I will allow no man to insult me," said the youth, and made a fierce attempt to push the door open.

"You are a wretch below insult," returned the doctor; and the next moment the youth staggered again down the steps, this time to fall, in awkward and ignominious fashion, half on the pavement, half in the road.

Then out on the top of the steps came Paul Faber, white with wrath, too full of indignation to see person or thing except the object of it.

"You damned rascal!" he cried. "If you set foot on my premises again, it will be at the risk of your contemptible life."

"Come, come, Mr. Faber! this won't do," returned the youth defiantly, as he gathered himself up. "I don't want to make a row, but—"

"*You* don't want to make a row, you puppy! Then *I* do. You don't come into my house again. I'll have your traps turned out to you. —Jenkins!—You had better leave the town as fast as you can too, for this won't be a secret."

"You'll allow me to call on Mr. Crispin first?"

"Do. Tell him the truth, and see whether he'll take the thing up! If I were God, I'd damn you!"

"Big words from you, Faber!" said the youth with a sneer, struggling hard to keep the advantage he had in temper. "Everybody knows you don't believe there is any God."

"Then there ought to be, so long as such as you 'ain't got your deserts. *You* set up for a doctor! I would sooner lose all the practice I ever made, than send *you* to visit woman or child, you heartless miscreant!"

The epithet the doctor really used here was stronger and more contemptuous, but it is better to take the liberty of substituting this.

"What have I done then to let loose all this Billingsgate?" cried the young man indignantly. "I have done nothing the most distinguished in the profession haven't done twenty times over."

"I don't care a damn. What's the profession to humanity! For a wonder the public is in the right on this question, and I side with the public. The profession may go to—Turkey!" —Probably Turkey was not the place he had intended to specify, but at the moment he caught sight of Juliet and her companion.— "There!" he concluded, pointing to the door

behind him, "you go in and put your things up —*and be off*."

Without another word, the young man ascended the steps, and entered the house.

Juliet stood staring, motionless and white. Again and again Dorothy would have turned back, but Juliet grasped her by the arm, stood as if frozen to the spot, and would not let her move. She *must* know what it meant. And all the time a little crowd had been gathering, as it well might, even in a town no bigger than Glaston, at such uproar in its usually so quiet streets. At first it was all women, who showed their interest by a fixed regard of each speaker in the quarrel in turn, and a confused staring from one to the other of themselves. No handle was yet visible by which to lay hold of the affair. But the moment the young man re-entered the surgery, and just as Faber was turning to go after him, out, like a bolt, shot from the open door a long-legged, gaunt mongrel dog, in such a pitiful state as I will not horrify my readers by attempting to describe. It is enough to say that the knife had been used upon him with a ghastly freedom.

In an agony of soundless terror the poor animal, who could never recover the usage he had had, and seemed likely to tear from himself a part of his body at every bound, rushed through the spectators, who scattered horror-stricken from his path. Ah, what a wild waste look the creature had!—as if his spirit within him were wan with dismay at the lawless invasion of his humble house of life. A cry, almost a shriek, rose from the little crowd, to which a few men had now added themselves. The doctor came dashing down the steps in pursuit of him. The same instant, having just escaped collision with the dog, up came Mr. Drew. His round face flamed like the sun in a fog with anger and pity and indignation. He rushed straight at the doctor, and would have collared him. Faber flung him from him without a word, and ran on. The draper reeled, but recovered himself, and was starting to follow, when Juliet, hurrying up, with white face and flashing eyes, laid her hand on his arm, and said, in a voice of whose authoritative tone she was herself unconscious,

"Stop, Mr. Drew."

The draper obeyed, but stood speechless with anger, not yet doubting it was the doctor who had so misused the dog.

"I have been here from the first," she went on. "Mr. Faber is as angry as you are.—Please, Dorothy, will you come?—It is that assistant of his, Mr. Drew! He hasn't been with him more than three days."

With Dorothy beside her, Juliet now told him, loud enough for all to hear, what they had heard and seen.

"I must go and beg his pardon," said the draper. "I had no right to come to such a hasty conclusion. I hope he will not find it hard to forgive me."

"You did no more than he would have done in your place," replied Juliet. "—But," she added, "where is the God of that poor animal, Mr. Drew?"

"I expect he's taken him by this time," answered the draper. "But I must go and find the doctor."

So saying, he turned and left them. The ladies went also, and the crowd dispersed. But already rumours, as evil as discordant,

were abroad in Glaston to the prejudice of Faber, and at the door of his godlessness was from all sides laid the charge of cruelty.

How difficult it is to make prevalent the right notion of anything! But only a little reflection is required to explain the fact. The cause is, that so few people give themselves the smallest trouble to understand what is told them. The first thing suggested by the words spoken, is taken instead of the fact itself, and to that as a ground-plan all that follows is fitted. People listen so badly, even when not sleepily, that the wonder is anything of consequence should ever be even approximately understood. How appalling it would be to one anxious to convey a meaning, to see the shapes his words assumed in the mind of his listening friend! For, in place of falling upon the table of his perception, kept steady by will and judgment, he would see them tumble upon the sounding-board of his imagination, ever vibrating, and there be danced like sand into all manner of shapes, according to the tune played by the capricious instrument. Thus, in Glaston, the strangest stories of barbarity and cruelty were now attributed to

a man entirely incapable of them. He was not one of the foul seekers after knowledge, and if he had had a presentiment of the natural tendency of his opinions, he would have trembled at the vision, and set himself to discover whether there might not be truth in another way of things.

As he went about in the afternoon amongst his sick and needy, the curate heard several of these ill reports. Some communicated them to ease their own horror, others in the notion of pleasing the believer by revolting news of the unbeliever. In one house he was told that the poor young man whom Dr. Faber had enticed to be his assistant, had behaved in the most gentlemanly fashion, had thrown up his situation, consenting to the loss of his salary, rather than connive at the horrors of cruelty in which the doctor claimed his help. Great moan was made over the pity that such a nice man should be given to such abominations; but where was the wonder, some said, seeing he was the enemy of God, that he should be the enemy of the beasts God had made? Much truth, and many wise reflections were uttered, only they were not "as

level as the cannon to his blank," for they were pointed at the wrong man.

There was one thing in which Wingfold differed from most of his parishioners: he could hear with his judgment, and make his imagination lie still. At the same time, in order to arrive the more certainly at the truth, in any matter presented to him, he would, in general, listen to the end of what anybody had to say. So doing he let eagerness exhaust itself, and did not by opposition in the first heat of narration, excite partisan interest, or wake malevolent caution. If the communication was worthy, he thus got all the worth of it; if it was evil, he saw to the bottom of it, and discovered, if such were there, the filthy reptile in the mud beneath, which was setting the whole ugly pool in commotion. By this deliberateness he also gave the greater weight to what answer he saw fit to give at last—sometimes with the result of considerable confusion of face to the narrator. In the present instance, he contented himself with the strongest assurance that the whole story was a mistake so far as it applied to Mr. Faber, who had, in fact, dismissed his assistant

for the very crime of which they accused himself. The next afternoon, he walked the whole length of Pine-street with the doctor, conversing all the way.

Nor did he fail to turn the thing to advantage. He had for some time been awaiting a fit opportunity for instructing his people upon a point which he thought greatly neglected: here was the opportunity, and he made haste to avail himself of it.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GROANS OF THE INARTICULATE.

THE rest of the week was rainy, but Sunday rose a day of perfect summer. As the curate went up the pulpit-stair, he felt as if the pulse of all creation were beating in unison with his own; for to-day he was the speaker for the speechless, the interpreter of groans to the creation of God.

He read, *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father*, and said:

"My friends, doth God care for sparrows? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes, and not at all for the sparrows? No, truly; for indeed it would be nothing to us if it were not everything to the sparrows. The word cannot reach our door except through the sparrow's nest.

For see! what comfort would it be to us to be told we were of more value than ever so many sparrows, if their value was nothing—if God only knew and did not care for them? The saying would but import that we were of more value than just nothing. Oh, how skilful is unbelief to take all the colour and all the sweetness and all the power out of the words of The Word himself! How many Christians are there not who take the passage to mean that not a sparrow can fall to the ground without the *knowledge* of its creator! A mighty thing that for the sparrow! If such a Christian seemed to the sparrow the lawful interpreter of the sparrow's creator, he would make an infidel of the sparrow. What Christ-like heart, what heart of loving man, could be content to take all the comfort to itself, and leave none for the sparrows? Not that of our mighty brother Paul. In his ears sounded, in his heart echoed, the cries of all the creation of God. Their groanings that could not be uttered, roused the response of his great compassion. When Christ was born in the heart of Paul, the whole creation of God was born with him; nothing that could

feel could he help loving; in the trouble of the creatures' troubles, sprang to life in his heart the hope, that all that could groan should yet rejoice, that on the lowest servant in the house should yet descend the fringe of the robe that was cast about the redeemed body of the Son. *He* was no pettifogging priest standing up for the rights of the superior! An exclusive is a self-excluded Christian. They that shut the door will find themselves on the wrong side of the door they have shut. They that push with the horn and stamp with the hoof, cannot be admitted to the fold. St. Paul would acknowledge no distinctions. He saw every wall—of seclusion, of exclusion, of partition, broken down. Jew and Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond and free—all must come in to his heart. Mankind was not enough to fill that divine space, enlarged to infinitude by the presence of the Christ: angels, principalities, and powers, must share in its conscious splendour. Not yet filled, yet unsatisfied with beings to love, Paul spread forth his arms to the whole groaning and troubled race of animals. Whatever could send forth a sigh of discomfort, or heave a

helpless limb in pain, he took to the bosom of his hope and affection—yea, of his love and faith: on them, too, he saw the cup of Christ's heart overflow. For Paul had heard, if not from his own, yet from the lips of them that heard him speak, the words, *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?* What if the little half-farthing things bear their share, and always have borne, in that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ? In any case, not one of them, not one so young that it topples from the edge of its nest, unable to fly, is forgotten by the Father of men. It shall not have a lonely deathbed, for the Father of Jesus will be with it. It *must* be true. It is indeed a daring word, but less would not be enough for the hearts of men, for the glory of God, for the need of the sparrow. I do not close my eyes to one of a thousand seemingly contradictory facts. I misdoubt my reading of the small-print notes, and appeal to the text, yea, beyond the text, even to the God of the sparrows himself.

"I count it as belonging to the smallness of our faith, to the poorness of our religion, to the

rudimentary condition of our nature, that our sympathy with God's creatures is so small. Whatever the narrowness of our poverty-stricken, threadbare theories concerning them, whatever the inhospitality and exclusiveness of our mean pride towards them, we cannot escape admitting that to them pain is pain, and comfort is comfort; that they hunger and thirst; that sleep restores and death delivers them: surely these are ground enough to the true heart wherefore it should love and cherish them—the heart at least that believes with St. Paul, that they need and have the salvation of Christ as well as we. Right grievously, though blindly, do they groan after it.

"The ignorance and pride which is for ever sinking us towards them, are the very elements in us which mislead us in our judgment concerning them, causing us to imagine them not upon a lower merely, but upon an altogether different footing in creation from our own. The same things we call by one name in us, and by another in them. How jealous have not men been as to allowing them any share worthy the name of reason! But you may see a

greater difference in this respect between the lowest and the highest at a common school, than you will between them and us. A pony that has taught itself without hands to pump water for its thirst, an elephant that puts forth its mighty lip to lift the moving wheel of the heavy waggon over the body of its fallen driver, has rather more to plead on the score of intellect than many a schoolboy. Not a few of them shed tears. A bishop, one of the foremost of our scholars, assured me that once he saw a certain animal laugh while playing off a practical joke on another of a different kind from himself. I do not mention the kind of animal, because it would give occasion for a silly articulate joke, far inferior to his practical one. I go further, and say, that I more than suspect a rudimentary conscience in every animal. I care not how remotely rudimentary. There must be in the moral world absolute and right potent germinal facts which lie infinitudes beyond the reach of any moral microscope, as in the natural world beyond the most powerful of lenses. Yet surely in this respect also, one may see betwixt boys at the same school

greater differences than there are betwixt the highest of the animals and the lowest of the humans. If you plead for time for the boy to develop his poor rudimentary mollusk of a conscience, take it and heartily welcome—but grant it the animals also. With some of them it may need millions of years for anything I know. Certainly in many human beings it never comes plainly into our ken all the time they walk the earth. Who shall say how far the vision of the apostle reached? but surely the hope in which he says God himself subjected the creature to vanity, must have been an infinite hope: I will hope infinitely. That the Bible gives any ground for the general fancy that at death an animal ceases to exist, is but the merest dullest assumption. Neither is there a single scientific argument, so far as I know, against the continued existence of the animals, which would not tell equally against human immortality. My hope is, that in some way, concerning which I do not now choose to speculate, there may be progress, growth, for them also. While I believe for myself, I *must* hope for them. This much at least seems

clear—and I could press the argument further: if not one of them is forgotten before God—and one of them yet passes out of being—then is God the God of the dead and not of the living! But we praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly king, God the Father almighty! Thy universe is life, life and not death. Even the death which awoke in the bosom of Sin, thy Son, opposing himself to its hate, and letting it spend its fury upon him, hath abolished. I know nothing, therefore care little, as to whether or not it may have pleased God to bring man up to the hill of humanity through the swamps and thickets of lower animal nature, but I do care that I should not now any more approach that level, whether once rightly my own or not. For what is honour in the animals, would be dishonour in me. Not the less may such be the punishment, perhaps redemption, in store for some men and women. For aught I know, or see unworthy in the thought, the self-sufficing exquisite, for instance, may one day find himself chattering amongst

fellow apes in some monkey-village of Africa or Burmah. Nor is the supposition absurd, though at first sight it may well so appear. Let us remember that we carry in us the characteristics of each and every animal. There is not one fiercest passion, one movement of affection, one trait of animal economy, one quality either for praise or blame, existing in them that does not exist in us. The relationship cannot be so very distant. And if theirs be so freely in us, why deny them so much we call ours? Hear how one of the ablest doctors of the English church, John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's in the reign of James the first, writes:—

Man is a lump where all beasts kneaded be;
Wisdom makes him an ark where all agree;
The fool, in whom these beasts do live at jar,
Is sport to others, and a theatre;
Nor scapes he so, but is himself their prey;
All which was man in him, is eat away;
And now his beasts on one another feed,
Yet couple in anger, and new monsters breed.
How happy's he which hath due place assigned
To his beasts, and disaforested his mind!
Empaled himself to keep them out, not in;
Can sow, and dares trust corn where they have been;
Can use his horse, goat, wolf, and every beast,
And is not ass himself to all the rest!

Else man not only is the herd of swine,
But he's those devils too which did incline
Them to an headlong rage, and made them worse ;
For man can add weight to heaven's heaviest curse.

"It astonishes me, friends, that we are not more terrified at ourselves. Except the living Father have brought order, harmony, a world, out of his chaos, a man is but a cage of unclean beasts, with no one to rule them, however fine a gentleman he may think himself. Even in this fair, well-ordered England of ours, at Kirkdale, in Yorkshire, was discovered, some fifty years ago, a great cavern that had once been a nest of gigantic hyenas, evidenced by their own unbroken bones, and the crushed bones of tigers, elephants, bears, and many other creatures. See to what a lovely peace the creating hand has even now brought our England, far as she is yet from being a province in the kingdom of heaven ; but see also in her former condition a type of the horror to which our souls may festering sink, if we shut out his free spirit, and have it no more moving upon the face of our waters. And when I say a type, let us be assured there is no type worth the

name which is not poor to express the glory or the horror it represents.

"To return to the animals: they are a care to God; they occupy part of his thoughts; we have duties towards them, owe them friendliness, tenderness. That God should see us use them as we do, is a terrible fact—a severe difficulty to faith. For to such a pass has the worship of Knowledge—an idol vile even as Mammon himself, and more cruel—arrived, that its priests, men kind as other men to their own children, kind to the animals of their household, kind even to some of the wild animals, men who will scatter crumbs to the robins in winter, and set water for the sparrows on their house-top in summer, will yet, in the worship of this their idol, in their greed after the hidden things of the life of the flesh, without scruple, confessedly without compunction, will, I say, dead to the natural motions of the divine element in them, the inherited pity of God, subject innocent, helpless, appealing, dumb souls, to such tortures whose bare description would justly set me forth to the blame of cruelty towards those who sat listening to the same.

Have these living, moving, seeing, hearing, feeling creatures, who could not be but by the will and the presence of another any more than ourselves—have they no rights in this their compelled existence? Does the most earnest worship of an idol excuse robbery with violence extreme to obtain the sacrifices he loves? Does the value of the thing that may be found there justify me in breaking into the house of another's life? Does his ignorance of the existence of that which I seek alter the case? Can it be right to water the tree of knowledge with blood, and stir its boughs with the gusts of bitter agony, that we may force its flowers into blossom before their time? Sweetly human must be the delights of knowledge so gained! grand in themselves, and ennobling in their tendencies! Will it justify the same, as a noble, a laudable, a worshipful endeavour, to cover it with the reason or pretext—God knows which—of such love for my own human kind as strengthens me to the most ruthless torture of their poorer relations, whose little treasure I would tear from them that it may teach me how to add to their wealth? May my God give me grace to

prefer a hundred deaths to a life gained by the suffering of one simplest creature. He holds his life as I hold mine, by finding himself there where I find myself. Shall I quiet my heart with the throbs of another heart? soothe my nerves with the agonized tension of a system? live a few days longer by a century of shrieking deaths? It were a hellish wrong, a selfish, hateful, violent injustice. An evil life it were that I gained or held by such foul means! How could I even attempt to justify the injury, save on the plea that I am already better and more valuable than he; that I am the stronger; that the possession of all the pleasures of human intelligence gives me a right to turn the poor innocent joys of his senses into pains before which, threatening my own person, my very soul would grow gray with fear? Or—let me grant what many professional men deny utterly, that some knowledge of what is called practical value to the race has been thus attained—what can be its result at best but the adding of a cubit to the life? Grant that it gave us an immortal earthly existence, one so happy that the most sensual would never wish for death: what

would it be by such means to live for ever? God in heaven! who, what is the man who would dare live a life wrung from the agonies of tortured innocents? Against the will of my Maker, live by means that are an abhorrence to his soul! Such a life must be all in the flesh! the spirit could have little share therein. Could it be even a life of the flesh that came of treason committed against essential animality? It could be but an abnormal monstrous existence, that sprang, toadstool-like, from the blood-marsh of cruelty—a life neither spiritual nor fleshly, but devilish.

"It is true we are above the creatures—but not to keep them down; they are for our use and service, but neither to be trodden under the foot of pride, nor misused as ministers, at their worst cost of suffering, to our inordinate desires of ease. After no such fashion did God give them to be our helpers in living. To be tortured that we might gather ease!—none but a devil could have made them for that! When I see a man, who professes to believe not only in a God, but such a God as holds his court in the person of Jesus Christ, assail with miserable cruelty the

scanty, lovely, timorous lives of the helpless about him, it sets my soul aflame with such indignant wrath, with such a sense of horrible incongruity and wrong to every harmony of Nature human and divine, that I have to make haste and rush to the feet of the Master, lest I should scorn and hate where he has told me to love. Such a wretch, not content that Christ should have died to save men, will tear Christ's living things into palpitating shreds, that he may discover from them how better to save the same men. Is this to be in the world as he was in the world? Picture to yourselves one of these Christian inquirers, erect before his class of students: knife in hand, he is demonstrating to them from the live animal, so fixed and screwed and wired that he cannot find for his agony even the poor relief of a yelp, how this or that writhing nerve or twitching muscle operates in the business of a life which his demonstration has turned from the gift of love into a poisoned curse; picture to yourselves such a one so busied, suddenly raising his eyes and seeing the eyes that see him!—the eyes of him who, when he hung upon the cross, knew that he suffered for

the whole creation of his Father, to lift it out of darkness into light, out of wallowing chaos into order and peace! Those eyes watching him, that pierced hand soothing his victim, would not the knife fall from his hand, in the divine paralysis that shoots from the heart and conscience? Ah me! to have those eyes upon me in *any* wrong-doing! One thing only could be worse—*not* to have them upon me—to be left with my devils.

"You all know the immediate cause of the turning of our thoughts in this direction—the sad case of cruelty that so unexpectedly rushed to light in Glaston. So shocked was the man in whose house it took place, that, as he drove from his door the unhappy youth who was guilty of the crime, this testimony, in the righteous indignation of his soul, believing, as you are aware, in no God and Father of all, broke from him with curses—'There ought to be a God to punish such cruelty.'—'Begone,' he said. 'Never would I commit woman or child into the hands of a wilful author of suffering.'

"We are to rule over the animals; the opposite of rule is torture, the final culmination of

anarchy. We slay them, and if with reason, then with right. Therein we do them no wrong. Yourselves will bear me witness how, ever and always in this place, I have protested that death is no evil, save as the element of injustice may be mingled therein. The sting of death is sin. Death, righteously inflicted, I repeat, is the reverse of an injury.

"What if there is too much lavishment of human affection upon objects less than human! it hurts less than if there were none. I confess that it moves with strange discomfort one who has looked upon swarms of motherless children, to see in a childless house a ruined dog, overfed, and snarling with discomfort even on the blessed throne of childhood, the lap of a woman. But even that is better than that the woman should love no creature at all—infinitely better! It may be she loves as she can. Her heart may not yet be equal to the love of a child, may be able only to cherish a creature whose oppositions are merely amusing, and whose presence, as doubtless it seems to her, gives rise to no responsibilites. Let her love her dog—even although her foolish treatment

of him should delay the poor animal in its slow trot towards canine perfection: she may come to love him better; she may herself through him advance to the love and the saving of a child—who can tell? But do not mistake me: there are women with hearts so divinely insatiable in loving, that in the mere gaps of their untiring ministration to humanity, they will fondle any living thing capable of receiving the overflow of their affection. Let such love as they will; they can hardly err. It is not of such that I have spoken.

"Again, to how many a lonely woman is not life made endurable, even pleasant, by the possession and the love of a devoted dog! The man who would focus the burning glass of science upon the animal, may well mock at such a mission, and speak words contemptuous of the yellow old maid with her yellow ribbons and her yellow dog. Nor would it change his countenance or soften his heart to be assured that that withered husk of womanhood was lovely once, and the heart in it is loving still; that she was reduced to all but misery by the self-indulgence of a brother, to whom the desola-

tion of a sister was but a pebble to pave the way to his pleasures; that there is no one left her now to love, or to be grateful for her love, but the creature which he regards merely as a box of nature's secrets, worthy only of being rudely ransacked for what it may contain, and thrown aside when shattered in the search. A box he is indeed, in which lies enclosed a shining secret!—a truth too radiant for the eyes of such a man as he: the love of a living God is, in him and his fellows, ranging the world in broken incarnation, ministering to forlorn humanity in dumb yet divine service. Who knows, in their great silence, how germane with ours may not be their share in the groanings that cannot be uttered!

"Friends, there must be a hell. If we leave scripture and human belief aside, science reveals to us that nature has her catastrophes—that there is just so much of the failed cycle, of the unrecovered, the unbalanced, the incompleted, the fallen-short, in her motions, that the result must be collision, shattering resumption, the rage of unspeakable fire. Our world and all the worlds of the system, are, I suppose,

doomed to fall back at length into their parent furnace. Then will come one end and another beginning. There is many an end and many a beginning. At one of those ends, and that not the farthest, must surely lie a hell, in which, of all sins, the sin of cruelty, under whatever pretext committed, will receive its meed from him with whom there is no respect of persons, but who giveth to every man according to his works. Nor will it avail him to plead that in life he never believed in such retribution; for a cruelty that would have been restrained by a fear of hell was none the less hell-worthy.

"But I will not follow this track. The general conviction of humanity will be found right against any conclusions calling themselves scientific, that go beyond the scope or the reach of science. Neither will I presume to suggest the operation of any *lex talionis* in respect of cruelty. I know little concerning the salvation by fire of which St. Paul writes in his first epistle to the Corinthians; but I say this, that if the difficulty of curing cruelty be commensurate with the horror of its nature, then

verily for the cruel must the furnace of wrath be seven times heated. Ah! for them, poor injured ones, the wrong passes away! Friendly, lovely death, the midwife of heaven, comes to their relief, and their pain sinks in precious peace.

"But what is to be done for our brother's soul, bespattered with the gore of innocence? Shall the cries and moans of the torture he inflicted haunt him like an evil smell? Shall the phantoms of exquisite and sickening pains float lambent about the fingers, and pass and repass through the heart and brain, that sent their realities quivering and burning into the souls of the speechless ones? It has been said somewhere that the hell for the cruel man would be to have the faces of all the creatures he had wronged come staring round him, with sad, weary eyes. But must not the divine nature, the pitiful heart of the universe, have already begun to reassert itself in him, before that would hurt him? Upon such a man the justice in my heart desires this retribution—to desire more would be to be more vile than he; to desire less would not be to love my brother:

—that the soul capable of such deeds shall be compelled to know the nature of its deeds in the light of the absolute Truth—that the eternal fact shall flame out from the divine region of its own conscience until it writhe in the shame of being itself, loathe as absolute horror the deeds which it would now justify, and long for deliverance from that which it has made of itself. The moment the discipline begins to blossom, the moment the man begins to thirst after confession and reparation, then is he once more my brother; then from an object of disgust in spite of pity, he becomes a being for all tender honest hearts in the universe of God to love, cherish, revere.

"Meantime, you who behold with aching hearts the wrongs done to the lower brethren that ought to be cherished as those to whom less has been given, having done all, stand comforted in the thought that not one of them suffers without the loving, caring, sustaining presence of the great Father of the universe, the Father of men, the God and Father of Jesus Christ, the God of the sparrows and the ravens and the oxen—yea, of the lilies of the field."

As might be expected, Mrs. Ramshorn was indignant. What right had he to desecrate a pulpit of the church of England by misusing it for the publication of his foolish fancies about creatures that had not reason! Of course nobody would think of being cruel to them, poor things! But there was that silly man talking about them as if they were better Christians than any of them! He was intruding into things he had not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.

The last portion of these remarks she made in the hearing of her niece, who carried it home for the amusement of her husband. He said he could laugh with a good conscience, for the reading of the passage, according to the oldest manuscripts we have, was not "the things he hath not seen," but "the things he hath seen," and he thought it meant—haunting the visible, the sensuous, the fleshly, so, for the satisfaction of an earthly imagination, in love with embodiment for its own sake, worshipping angels, and not keeping hold of the invisible, the real, the true—the mind, namely, and spirit of the living Christ, the Head.

"Poor auntie," replied Helen, "would hold herself quite above the manuscripts. With her it is the merest sectarianism and radicalism to meddle with the text as appointed to be read in churches. What was good enough for the dean, must be far more than good enough for an unbeneficed curate!"

But the rector, who loved dogs and horses, was delighted with the sermon.

Faber's whole carriage and conduct in regard to the painful matter was such as to add to Juliet's confidence in him. Somehow she grew more at ease in his company, and no longer took pains to avoid him.

CHAPTER VII.

COW-LANE-CHAPEL.

BY degrees Mr. Drake's mind grew quiet, and accommodated itself to the conditions of the new atmosphere in which at first it was so hard for him to draw spiritual breath. He found himself again able to pray, and while he bowed his head lower before God, he lifted up his heart higher towards him. His uncle's bequest presenting no appropriative difficulties, he at once set himself to be a faithful and wise steward of the grace of God, to which holy activity the return of his peace was mainly owing. Now and then the fear would return that God had sent him the money in displeasure, that he had handed him over all his principal, and refused to be his banker any more; and the light-winged, haunting dread

took from him a little even of the blameless pleasure that naturally belonged to the paying of his debts. Also he now became plainly aware of a sore fact which he had all his life dimly suspected—namely, that there was in his nature a spot of the leprosy of avarice, the desire to accumulate. Hence he grew almost afraid of his money, and his anxiety to spend it freely and right, to keep it flowing lest it should pile up its waves and drown his heart, went on steadily increasing. That he could hoard now if he pleased, gave him just the opportunity of burning the very possibility out of his soul. It is those who are unaware of their proclivities, and never pray against them, that must be led into temptation, lest they should for ever continue capable of evil. When a man could do a thing, then first can he abstain from doing it. Now, with his experience of both poverty and riches, the minister knew that he must make them both follow like hounds at his heel. If he were now to love money, if, even in the free use of it, he were to regard it with honour, fear its loss, forget that it came from God, and must return to God

through holy channels, he must sink into a purely contemptible slave. Where would be the room for any further repentance? He would have had every chance, and failed in every trial the most opposed! He must be lord of his wealth; Mammon must be the slave, not Walter Drake. Mammon must be more than his brownie, more than his Robin Good-fellow; he must be the subject Djin of a holy spell—holier than Solomon's wisdom, more potent than the stamp of his seal. At present he almost feared him as a Caliban to whom he might not be able to play Prospero, an Ufreet half-escaped from his jar, a demon he had raised, for whom he must find work, or be torn by him into fragments. The slave must have drudgery, and the master must take heed that he never sent him alone to do love's dear service.

"I am sixty," he said to himself, "and I have learned to begin to learn." Behind him his public life looked a mere tale that is told; his faith in the things he had taught had been little better than that which hangs about an ancient legend. He had been in a measure

truthful; he had endeavoured to act upon what he taught; but alas! the accidents of faith had so often been uppermost with him, instead of its eternal fundamental truths! How unlike the affairs of the kingdom did all that church-business look to him now!—the rich men ruling —the poor men grumbling! In the whole assembly, including himself, could he honestly say he knew more than one man that sought the kingdom of heaven *first?* And yet he had been tolerably content, until they began to turn against himself!—What better could they have done than get rid of him? The whole history of their relation appeared now a mass of untruth shot through with threads of light. Now, now, he would strive to enter in at the strait gate: the question was not of pushing others in. He would mortify the spirit of worldly judgments and ambitions; he would be humble as the servant of Christ.

Dorothy's heart was relieved a little. She could read her father's feelings better than most wives those of their husbands, and she knew he was happier. But she was not herself happier. She would gladly have parted with

all the money for a word from any quarter that could have assured her there was a God in heaven who *loved*. But the teaching of the curate had begun to tell upon her. She had begun to have a faint perception that if the story of Jesus Christ was true, there might be a Father to be loved, and being might be a bliss. The poorest glimmer of his loveliness gives a dawn to our belief in a God; and a small amount indeed of genuine knowledge of him will serve to neutralize the most confident declaration that science is against the idea of a God—an utterance absolutely false. Scientific men may be unbelievers, but it is not from the teaching of science. Science teaches that a man must not say he knows what he does not know; not that what a man does not know he may say does not exist. I will grant, however, and willingly, that true science is against Faber's idea of other people's idea of a God. I will grant also that the tendency of one who exclusively studies science is certainly to deny what no one has proved, and he is uninterested in proving; but that is the fault of the man and his lack of science, not of the science he

has. If people understood better the arrogance of which they are themselves guilty, they would be less ready to imagine that a strong assertion necessarily implies knowledge. Nothing can be known except what is true. A negative may be *fact*, but cannot be *known* except by the knowledge of its opposite. I believe also that nothing can be really *believed*, except it be true. But people think they believe many things which they do not and cannot in the real sense believe.

When, however, Dorothy came to concern herself about the will of God, in trying to help her father to do the best with their money, she began to reap a little genuine comfort, for then she found things begin to explain themselves a little. The more a man occupies himself in doing the works of the Father—the sort of thing the Father does, the easier will he find it to believe that such a Father is at work in the world.

In the curate Mr. Drake had found not only a man he could trust, but one to whom, young as he was, he could look up; and it was a trait in the minister nothing short of noble, that he

did look up to the curate—perhaps without knowing it. He had by this time all but lost sight of the fact, once so monstrous, so unchristian in his eyes, that he was the paid agent of a government-church: the sight of the man's own house, built on a rock in which was a well of the water of life, had made him nearly forget it. In his turn he could give the curate much; the latter soon discovered that he knew a great deal more about Old Testament criticism, church-history, and theology—understanding by the last the records of what men had believed and argued about God—than he did. They often disagreed and not seldom disputed; but while each held the will and law of Christ as the very foundation of the world, and obedience to him as the way to possess it after its idea, how could they fail to know that they were brothers? They were gentle with each other for the love of him whom in eager obedience they called Lord.

The moment his property was his availably, the minister betook himself to the curate.

"Now," he said—he too had the gift of going pretty straight, though not quite so

straight as the curate—"Now, Mr. Wingfold, tell me plainly what you think the first thing I ought to do with this money towards making it a true gift of God. I mean, what can I do with it for somebody else—some person or persons to whom money in my hands, not in theirs, may become a small saviour?"

"You want, in respect of your money," rejoined the curate, "to be in the world as Christ was in the world, setting right what is wrong in ways possible to you, and not counteracting his? You want to do the gospel as well as preach it?"

"That is what I mean—or rather what I wish to mean. You have said it.—What do you count the first thing I should try to set right?"

"I should say *injustice*. My very soul revolts against the talk about kindness to the poor, when such a great part of their misery comes from the injustice and greed of the rich."

"I well understand," returned Mr. Drake, "that a man's first business is to be just to his neighbour, but I do not so clearly see when he is to interfere to make others just. Our Lord

would not settle the division of the inheritance between the two brothers."

"No, but he gave them a lesson concerning avarice, and left that to work. I don't suppose anybody is unjust for love of injustice. I don't understand the pure devilish very well—though I have glimpses into it. Your way must be different from our Lord's in form, that it may be the same in spirit: you have to work with money; his father had given him none. In his mission he was not to use all means—only the best. But even he did not attack individuals to *make* them do right; and if you employ your money in doing justice to the oppressed and afflicted, to those shorn of the commonest rights of humanity, it will be the most powerful influence of all to wake the sleeping justice in the dull hearts of other men. It is the business of anybody who can, to set right what anybody has set wrong. I will give you a special instance, which has been in my mind all the time. Last spring—and it was the same the spring before, my first in Glaston—the floods brought misery upon every family in what they call the Pottery here. How some of them get through

any wet season I cannot think; but Faber will tell you what a multitude of sore throats, cases of croup, scarlet-fever, and diphtheria, he has to attend in those houses every spring and autumn. They are crowded with labourers and their families, who, since the railway came, have no choice but live there, and pay a much heavier rent in proportion to their accommodation than you or I do—in proportion to the value of the property, immensely heavier. Is it not hard? Men are their brothers' keepers indeed—but it is in chains of wretchedness they keep them. Then again—I am told that the owner of these cottages, who draws a large yearly sum from them, and to the entreaties of his tenants for really needful repairs, gives nothing but promises, is one of the most influential attendants of a chapel you know, where, Sunday after Sunday, the gospel is preached. If this be true, here again is a sad wrong: what can those people think of religion so represented?"

"I am a sinful man," exclaimed the pastor. "That Barwood is one of the deacons. He is the owner of the chapel as well as the cottages.

I ought to have spoken to him years ago.—But," he cried, starting to his feet, "the property is for sale! I saw it in the paper this very morning! Thank God!"—He caught up his hat.—"I shall have no choice but buy the chapel too," he added, with a queer, humorous smile; "—it is part of the property. —Come with me, my dear sir. We must see to it directly. You will speak: I would rather not appear in the affair until the property is my own; but I will buy those houses, please God, and make them such as his poor sons and daughters may live in without fear or shame."

The curate was not one to give a cold bath to enthusiasm. They went out together, got all needful information, and within a month the title-deeds were in Mr. Drake's possession.

When the rumour reached the members of his late congregation that he had come in for a large property, many called to congratulate him, and such congratulations are pretty sure to be sincere. But he was both annoyed and amused when—it was in the morning, during business hours—Dorothy came and told him, not without some show of disgust, that a

deputation from the church in Cow-lane was below.

"We've taken the liberty of calling, in the name of the church, to congratulate you, Mr. Drake," said their leader, rising with the rest as the minister entered the dining-room.

"Thank you," returned the minister quietly.

"I fancy," said the other, who was Barwood himself, with a smile such as heralds the facetious, "you will hardly condescend to receive our little gratuity now?"

"I shall not require it, gentlemen."

"Of course we should never have offered you such a small sum, if we hadn't known you were independent of us."

"Why then did you offer it at all?" asked the minister.

"As a token of our regard."

"The regard could not be very lively that made no inquiry as to our circumstances. My daughter had twenty pounds a year; I had nothing. We were in no small peril of simple starvation."

"Bless my soul! we hadn't an idea of such a thing, sir! Why didn't you tell us?"

Mr. Drake smiled, and made no other reply.

"Well, sir," resumed Barwood, after a very brief pause, for he was a man of magnificent assurance, "as it's all turned out so well, you'll let bygones be bygones, and give us a hand?"

"I am obliged to you for calling," said Mr. Drake, "—especially to you, Mr. Barwood, because it gives me an opportunity of confessing a fault of omission on my part towards you."

Here the pastor was wrong. Not having done his duty when he ought, he should have said nothing now it was needless for the wronged, and likely only to irritate the wrong-doer.

"Don't mention it, pray," said Mr. Barwood. "This is a time to forget everything."

"I ought to have pointed out to you, Mr. Barwood," pursued the minister, "both for your own sake and that of those poor families, your tenants, that your property in this lower part of the town was quite unfit for the habitation of human beings."

"Don't let your conscience trouble you on

the score of that neglect," answered the deacon, his face flushing with anger, while he tried to force a smile: "I shouldn't have paid the least attention to it if you had. My firm opinion has always been that a minister's duty is to preach the gospel, not meddle in the private affairs of the members of his church; and if you knew all, Mr. Drake, you would not have gone out of your way to make the remark. But that's neither here nor there, for it's not the business as we've come upon.—Mr. Drake, it's a clear thing to every one as looks into it, that the cause will never prosper so long as that's the chapel we've got. We did think as perhaps a younger man might do something to counteract church-influences; but there don't seem any sign of betterment yet. In fact, things looks worse. No, sir! it's the chapel as is the stumbling-block. What has religion got to do with what's ugly and dirty! A place that any lady or gentleman, let he or she be ever so much of a Christian, might turn up the nose and refrain the foot from! No! I say; what we want is a new place of worship. Cow-lane is behind the age—and *that* musty! uw!"

"With the words of truth left sticking on the walls?" suggested Mr. Drake.

"Ha! ha! ha!—Good that!" exclaimed several.

But the pastor's face looked stern, and the voices dropped into rebuked silence.

"At least you'll allow, sir," persisted Barwood, "that the house of God ought to be as good as the houses of his people. It stands to reason. Depend upon it, he won't give us no success till we give him a decent house. What, are we to dwell in houses of cedar, and the ark of the Lord in a tent? That's what it comes to, sir!"

The pastor's spiritual gorge rose at this paganism in Jew clothing.

"You think God loves newness and finery better than the old walls where generations have worshipped?" he said.

"I make no doubt of it, sir," answered Barwood. "What's generations to him! He wants the people drawn to his house; and what there is in Cow-lane to draw is more than I know."

"I understand you wish to sell the chapel,"

said Mr. Drake. "Is it not rather imprudent to bring down the value of your property before you have got rid of it?"

Barwood smiled a superior smile. He considered the bargain safe, and thought the purchaser a man who was certain to pull the chapel down.

"I know who the intending purchaser is," said Mr. Drake, "and——"

Barwood's countenance changed: he bethought himself that the conveyance was not completed, and half started from his chair.

"You would never go to do such an unneighbourly act," he cried, "as——"

"—As conspire to bring down the value of a property the moment it had passed out of my hands?—I would not, Mr. Barwood; and this very day the intending purchaser shall know of your project."

Barwood locked his teeth together, and grinned with rage. He jumped from his seat, knocked it over in getting his hat from under it, and rushed out of the house. Mr. Drake smiled, and looking calmly round on the rest of the deacons, held his peace. It was a very

awkward moment for them. At length one of them, a small tradesman, ventured to speak. He dared make no allusion to the catastrophe that had occurred. It would take much reflection to get hold of the true weight and bearing of what they had just heard and seen, for Barwood was a mighty man among them.

"What we were thinking, sir," he said, "—and you will please to remember, Mr. Drake, that I was always on your side, and it's better to come to the point: there's a strong party of us in the church, sir, that would like to have you back, and we was thinking if you would condescend to help us, now as you're so well able to, sir, towards a new chapel, now as you have the means, as well as the will, to do God service, sir, what with the chapel-building society, and every man-jack of us setting our shoulder to the wheel, and we should all do our very best, we should get a nice, new, I won't say showy, but attractive—that's the word, attractive place—not gaudy, you know, I never would give in to that, but ornamental too—and in a word, attractive—that's it—a place to which the people would be drawn by the look

of it outside, and kep' by the look of it inside — a place as would make the people of Glaston say, 'Come, and let us go up to the house of the Lord,'—if, with your help, sir, we had such a place, then perhaps you would condescend to take the reins again, sir, and we should then pay Mr. Rudd as your assistant, leaving the whole management in your hands—to preach when you pleased, and leave it alone when you didn't.—There, sir! I think that's much the whole thing in a nutshell."

"And now will you tell me what result you would look for under such an arrangement?"

"We should look for the blessing of a little success; it's a many years since we was favoured with any."

"And by success you mean——?"

"A large attendance of regular hearers in the morning—not a seat to let!—and the people of Glaston crowding to hear the word in the evening, and going away because they can't get a foot inside the place! That's the success *I* should like to see."

"What! would you have all Glaston such as

yourselves!" exclaimed the pastor indignantly. "Gentlemen, this is the crowning humiliation of my life! Yet I am glad of it, because I deserve it, and it will help to make and keep me humble. I see in you the wood and hay and stubble with which, alas! I have been building all these years! I have been preaching dissent instead of Christ, and there you are!—dissenters indeed—but can I—can I call you Christians? Assuredly do I believe the form of your church that ordained by the apostles, but woe is me for the material whereof it is built! Were I to aid your plans with a single penny in the hope of withdrawing one inhabitant of Glaston from the preaching of Mr. Wingfold, a man who speaks the truth and fears nobody, as I, alas! have feared you, because of your dullness of heart and slowness of understanding, I should be doing the body of Christ a grievous wrong. I have been as one beating the air in talking to you against episcopacy when I ought to have been preaching against dishonesty; eulogizing congregationalism, when I ought to have been training you in the three abiding graces, and chiefly in the

greatest of them, charity. I have taken to pieces and put together for you the plan of salvation, when I ought to have spoken only of him who is the way and the truth and the life. I have been losing my life, and helping you to lose yours. But go to the abbey church, and there a man will stir you up to lay hold upon God, will teach you to know Christ, each man for himself and not for another. Shut up your chapel, put off your scheme of a new one, go to the abbey church, and be filled with the finest of the wheat. Then should this man depart, and one of the common episcopal train, whose God is the church, and whose neighbour is the order of the priesthood, come to take his place, and preach against dissent as I have so foolishly preached against the church—then, and not till then, will the time be to gather together your savings and build yourselves a house to pray in. Then, if I am alive, as I hope I shall not be, come, and I will aid your purpose liberally. Do not mistake me: I believe as strongly as ever I did that the constitution of the church of England is all wrong; that the arrogance and assumption of her priesthood is

essentially opposed to the very idea of the kingdom of heaven; that the Athanasian creed is unintelligible, and where intelligible, cruel; but where I find my Lord preached as only one who understands him can preach him, and as I never could preach him, and never heard him preached before, even faults great as those shall be to me as merest accidents. Gentlemen, everything is pure loss—chapels and creeds and churches—all is loss that comes between us and Christ—individually, masterfully. And of unchristian things one of the most unchristian is to dispute and separate in the name of him whose one object was, and whose one victory will be unity.—Gentlemen, if you should ever ask me to preach to you, I will do so with pleasure."

They rose as one man, bade him an embarrassed good morning, and walked from the room, some with their heads thrown back, others hanging them forward in worshipful shame. The former spread the rumour that the old minister had gone crazy, the latter began to go now and then to church.

I may here mention, as I shall have no other

opportunity, that a new chapel was not built; that the young pastor soon left the old one; that the deacons declared themselves unable to pay the rent; that Mr. Drake took the place into his own hands, and preached there every Sunday evening, but went always in the morning to hear Mr. Wingfold. There was kindly human work of many sorts done by them in concert, and each felt the other a true support. When the pastor and the parson chanced to meet in some lowly cottage, it was never with embarrassment or apology, as if they served two masters, but always with hearty and glad greeting, and they always went away together. I doubt if wickedness does half as much harm as sectarianism, whether it be the sectarianism of the church or of dissent, the sectarianism whose virtue is condescension, or the sectarianism whose vice is pride. Division has done more to hide Christ from the view of men, than all the infidelity that has ever been spoken. It is the half-Christian clergy of every denomination that are the main cause of the so-called failure of the church of Christ. Thank God, it has not failed so miserably as to succeed in the

estimation or to the satisfaction of any party in it.

But it was not merely in relation to forms of church government that the heart of the pastor now in his old age began to widen. It is foolish to say that after a certain age a man cannot alter. That some men cannot—or will not, (God only can draw the line between those two *nots*) I allow; but the cause is not age, and it is not universal. The man who does not care and ceases to grow, becomes torpid, stiffens, is in a sense dead; but he who has been growing all the time needs never stop; and where growth is, there is always capability of change: growth itself is a succession of slow melodious ascending changes.

The very next Sunday after the visit of their deputation to him, the church in Cow-lane asked their old minister to preach to them. Dorothy, as a matter of course, went with her father, although, dearly as she loved him, she would have much preferred hearing what the curate had to say. The pastor's text was, *Ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law—judgment,*

mercy, and faith. In his sermon he enforced certain of the dogmas of a theology which once expressed more truth than falsehood, but now at least *conveys* more falsehood than truth, because of the changed conditions of those who teach and those who hear it; for even where his faith had been vital enough to burst the verbally rigid, formal, and indeed spiritually vulgar theology he had been taught, his intellect had not been strong enough to cast off the husks. His expressions, assertions, and arguments, tying up a bundle of mighty truth with cords taken from the lumber-room and the ash-pit, grazed severely the tenderer nature of his daughter. When they reached the house, and she found herself alone with her father in his study, she broke suddenly into passionate complaint—not that he should so represent God, seeing, for what she knew, he might indeed be such, but that, so representing God, he should expect men to love him. It was not often that her sea, however troubled in its depths, rose into such visible storm. She threw herself upon the floor with a loud cry, and lay sobbing and weeping. Her father was terribly startled, and

stood for a moment as if stunned; then a faint slow light began to break in upon him, and he stood silent, sad, and thoughtful. He knew that he loved God, yet in what he said concerning him, in the impression he gave of him, there was that which prevented the best daughter in the world from loving her Father in heaven! He began to see that he had never really thought about these things; he had been taught them but had never turned them over in the light, never perceived the fact, that, however much truth might be there, there also was what at least looked like a fearful lie against God. For a moment he gazed with keen compassion on his daughter as she lay, actually writhing in her agony, then knelt beside her, and laying his hand upon her, said gently:—

"Well, my dear, if those things are not true, my saying them will not make them so."

She sprung to her feet, threw her arms about his neck, kissed him, and left the room. The minister remained upon his knees.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DOCTOR'S HOUSE.

THE holidays came, and Juliet took advantage of them to escape from what had begun to be a bondage to her—the daily intercourse with people who disapproved of the man she loved. In her thoughts even she took no intellectual position against them with regard to what she called doctrine, and Faber superstition. Her father had believed as they did; she clung to his memory; perhaps she believed as he did; she could not tell. There was time yet wherein to make up her mind. She had certainly believed so once, she said to herself, and she might so believe again. She would have been at first highly offended, but the next moment a little pleased at being told that in reality she had never believed one whit more than Faber,

that she was at present indeed incapable of believing. Probably she would have replied, "Then wherein am I to blame?" But although a woman who sits with her child in her arms in the midst of her burning house, half asleep, and half stifled and dazed with the fierce smoke, may not be to blame, certainly the moment she is able to excuse herself she is bound to make for the door. So long as men do not feel that they are in a bad condition and in danger of worse, the message of deliverance will sound to them as a threat. Yea, the offer of absolute well-being upon the only possible conditions of the well-being itself, must, if heard at all, rouse in them a discomfort whose cause they attribute to the message, not to themselves; and immediately they will endeavour to justify themselves in disregarding it. There are those doing all they can to strengthen themselves in unbelief, who, if the Lord were to appear plainly before their eyes, would tell him they could not help it, for he had not until then given them ground enough for faith, and when he left them, would go on just as before, except that they would speculate and pride themselves

on the vision. If men say, "We want no such deliverance," then the maker of them must either destroy them as vile things for whose existence he is to himself accountable, or compel them to change. If they say, "We choose to be destroyed," he, as their maker, has a choice in the matter too. Is he not free to say, "You cannot even slay yourselves, and I choose that you shall know the death of living without me; you shall learn to choose to live indeed. I choose that you shall know what *I know* to be good"? And however much any individual consciousness may rebel, surely the individual consciousness which called that other into being, and is the father of that being, fit to be such because of himself he is such, has a right to object that by rebellion his creature should destroy the very power by which it rebels, and from a being capable of a divine freedom by partaking of the divine nature, should make of itself the merest slave incapable of will of any sort! Is it a wrong to compel his creature to soar aloft into the æther of its origin, and find its deepest, its only true self? It is God's knowing choice of

life against man's ignorant choice of death.

But Juliet knew nothing of such a region of strife in the human soul. She had no suspicion what an awful swamp lay around the prison of the self-content—no, self-discontent—in which she lay chained. To her the one good and desirable thing was the love and company of Paul Faber. He was her saviour, she said to herself, and the woman who could not love and trust and lean upon such a heart of devotion and unselfishness as his, was unworthy of the smallest of his thoughts. He was nobility, generosity, justice itself! If she sought to lay her faults bare to him, he would but fold her to his bosom to shut them out from her own vision! He would but lay his hand on the lips of confession, and silence them as unbelievers in his perfect affection! He was better than the God the Wingfolds and Drakes believed in, with whom humiliation was a condition of acceptance!

She told the Drakes that, for the air of Owlkirk, she was going to occupy her old quarters with Mrs. Puckridge during the holidays. They were not much surprised, for they had re-

marked a change in her manner, and it was not long unexplained; for, walking from the old house together one evening rather late, they met her with the doctor in a little frequented part of the park. When she left them, they knew she would not return; and her tears betrayed that she knew it also.

Meantime the negotiation for the purchase of the Old House of Glaston was advancing with slow legal sinuosity. Mr. Drake had offered the full value of the property, and the tender seemed to be regarded not unfavourably. But his heart and mind were far more occupied with the humbler property he had already secured in the town: that was now to be fortified against the incursions of the river, with its attendant fevers and agues. A survey of the ground had satisfied him that a wall at a certain point would divert a great portion of the water, and this wall he proceeded at once to build. He hoped in the end to enclose the ground altogether, or at least to defend it at every assailable point, but there were many other changes imperative, with difficulties such that they could not all be coped with at once. The worst of

the cottages must be pulled down, and as they were all even over-full, he must contrive to build first. Nor until that was done, could he effect much towards rendering the best of them fit for human habitation.

Some of the householders in the lower part of the adjoining street shook their heads when they saw what the bricklayers were about. They had reason to fear they were turning the water more upon them; and it seemed a wrong that the wretched cottages which had from time immemorial been accustomed to the water, should be now protected from it at the cost of respectable houses. It did not occur to them that it might be time for Lady Fortune to give her wheel a few inches of a turn. To common minds, custom is always right so long as it is on their side.

In the meantime the chapel in the park at Nestley had been advancing, for the rector, who was by nature no dawdler where he was interested, had been pushing it on; and at length on a certain Sunday evening in the autumn, the people of the neighbourhood having been invited to attend, the rector read

prayers in it, and the curate preached a sermon. At the close of the service the congregation was informed that prayers would be read there every Sunday evening, and that was all. Mrs. Bevis, honest soul, the green-mantled pool of whose being might well desire a wind, if only from a pair of bellows, to disturb its repose, for not a fish moved to that end in its sunless deeps—I say deeps, for such there must have been, although neither she nor her friends were acquainted with anything there but shallows—was the only one inclined to grumble at the total absence of ceremonial pomp: she did want her husband to have the credit of the great deed.

About the same time it was that Juliet again sought the cottage at Owlkirk, with the full consciousness that she went there to meet her fate. Faber came to see her every day, and both Ruber and Niger began to grow skinny. But I have already said enough to show the nature and course of the stream, and am not bound to linger longer over its noise among the pebbles. Some things are interesting rather for their results than their process, and

of such I confess is to me the love-making of these two.—"What! were they not human?" Yes; but with a truncated humanity—ever shorn of its flower-buds, and full only of variegated leaves. It shall suffice therefore to say that, in a will-less sort of way, Juliet let the matter drift; that, although she withheld explicit consent, she yet at length allowed Faber to speak as if she had given it; that they had long ceased to talk about God or no God, about life and death, about truth and superstition, and spoke only of love, and the days at hand, and how they would spend them; that they poured out their hearts in praising and worshipping each other; and that, at last, Juliet found herself as firmly engaged to be Paul's wife, as if she had granted every one of the promises he had sought to draw from her, but which she had avoided giving in the weak fancy that thus she was holding herself free. It was perfectly understood in all the neighbourhood that the doctor and Miss Meredith were engaged. Both Helen and Dorothy felt a little hurt at her keeping an absolute silence towards them concerning what the country seemed to

know; but when they spoke of it to her, she pointedly denied any engagement, and indeed, although helplessly drifting towards marriage, had not yet given absolute consent even in her own mind. She dared not even then regard it as inevitable. Her two friends came to the conclusion that she could not find the courage to face disapproval, and perhaps feared expostulation.

"She may well be ashamed of such an unequal yoking!" said Helen to her husband.

"There is no unequal yoking in it that I see," he returned. "In the matter of faith, what is there to choose between them? I see nothing. They may carry the yoke straight enough. If there *be* one of them farther from the truth than the other, it must be the one who says, *I go, sir*, and goes not. Between *don't believe* and *don't care*, *I* don't care to choose. Let them marry and God bless them. It will be good for them—for one thing if for no other—it is sure to bring trouble to both."

"Indeed, Mr. Wingfold!" returned Helen playfully. "So that is how you regard marriage!—Sure to bring trouble!"

She laid her head on his shoulder.

"Trouble to every one, my Helen, like the gospel itself; more trouble to you than to me, but none to either that will not serve to bring us closer to each other," he answered. "But about those two—well, I am both doubtful and hopeful. At all events I cannot wish them not to marry. I think it will be for both of them a step nearer to the truth. The trouble will, perhaps, drive them to find God. That any one who had seen and loved our Lord, should consent to marry one, whatever that one was besides, who did not at least revere and try to obey him, seems to me impossible. But again I say there is no such matter involved between them.—Shall I confess to you, that, with all her frankness, all her charming ways, all the fulness of the gaze with which her black eyes look into yours, there is a something about Juliet that puzzles me? At times I have thought she must be in some trouble, out of which she was on the point of asking me to help her; at others I have fancied she was trying to be agreeable against her inclination, and did not more than half approve of me.

Sometimes, I confess, the shadow of a doubt crosses me—is she altogether a true woman? But that vanishes the moment she smiles. I wish she could have been open with me. I could have helped her, I am pretty sure. As it is, I have not got one step nearer the real woman than when first I saw her at the rector's."

"I know," said Helen. "But don't you think it may be that she has never yet come to know anything about herself—to perceive either fact or mystery of her own nature? If she is a stranger to herself, she cannot reveal herself—at least of her own will—to those about her. She is just what I was, Thomas, before I knew you—a dull sleepy-hearted thing that sat on her dignity. Be sure she has not an idea of the divine truth you have taught me to see underlying creation itself—namely, that everything possessed owes its very value as possession to the power which that possession gives of parting with it."

"You are a pupil worth having, Helen!—even if I had had to mourn all my days that you would not love me."

"And now you have said your mind about Juliet," Helen went on, "allow me to say that I trust her more than I do Faber. I do not for a moment imagine him consciously dishonest, but he makes too much show of his honesty for me. I cannot help feeling that he is selfish —and can a selfish man be honest?"

"Not thoroughly. I know that only too well, for I at all events am selfish, Helen."

"I don't see it; but if you are, you know it, and hate it, and strive against it. I do not think he knows it, even when he says that everybody is selfish. Only, what better way to get rid of it than to love and marry?"

"Or to confirm it," said Wingfold thoughtfully.

"I shouldn't wonder a bit if they're married already!" said Helen.

She was not far wrong, although not quite right. Already Faber had more than hinted at a hurried marriage, as private as could be compassed. It was impossible, of course, to be married at church. That would be to cast mockery on the marriage itself, as well as on what Faber called his *beliefs*. The objection was entirely on

Faber's side, but Juliet did not hint at the least difference of feeling in the matter. She let everything take its way now.

At length having, in a neighbouring town, arranged all the necessary preliminaries, Faber got one of the other doctors in Glaston to attend to his practice for three weeks, and went to take a holiday. Juliet left Owlkirk the same day. They met, were lawfully married, and at the close of the three weeks, returned together to the doctor's house.

The sort of thing did not please Glaston society, and although Faber was too popular as a doctor to lose position by it, Glaston was slow in acknowledging that it knew there was a lady at the head of his house. Mrs. Wingfold and Miss Drake, however, set their neighbours a good example and by degrees there came about a dribbling sort of recognition. Their social superiors stood the longest aloof—chiefly because the lady had been a governess, and yet had behaved so like one of themselves: they thought it well to give her a lesson. Most of them, however, not willing to offend the leading doctor in the place, yielded and called.

Two elderly spinsters and Mrs. Ramshorn did not. The latter declared she did not believe they were married. Most agreed they were the handsomest couple ever seen in that quarter, and looked all right.

Juliet returned the calls made upon her, at the proper retaliatory intervals, and gradually her mode of existence fell into routine. The doctor went out every day, and was out most of the day, while she sat at home and worked or read. She had to amuse herself, and sometimes found life duller than when she had to earn her bread—when, as she went from place to place, she might at any turn meet Paul upon Ruber or Niger. Already the weary weed of the commonplace had begun to show itself in the marriage garden—a weed which, like all weeds, requires only neglect for perfect development, when it will drive the lazy Eve who has never made her life worth *living*, to ask whether life be worth *having*. She was not a great reader. No book had ever yet been to her a well-spring of life; and such books as she liked best it was perhaps just as well that she could not easily procure in Glaston; for, always

ready to appreciate the noble, she had not moral discernment sufficient to protect her from the influences of such books as paint poor action in noble colour. For a time also she was stinted in her natural nourishment: her husband had ordered a grand piano from London for her, but it had not yet arrived; and the first touch she laid on the tall spinster-looking one that had stood in the drawing-room for fifty years, with red silk wrinkles radiating from a gilt centre, had made her shriek. If only Paul would buy a yellow gig, like his friend Dr. May of Broughill, and take her with him on his rounds! Or if she had a friend or two to go and see when he was out!—friends like what Helen or even Dorothy might have been: she was not going to be hand-in-glove with anybody that didn't like her Paul! She missed church too—not the prayers, much; but she did like hearing what she counted a good sermon, that is, a lively one. Her husband wanted her to take up some science, but if he had considered that, with all her gift in music, she expressed an utter indifference to thorough bass, he would hardly have been so foolish.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PONY-CARRIAGE.

ONE Saturday morning the doctor was called to a place a good many miles distant, and Juliet was left with the prospect of being longer alone than usual. She felt it almost sultry although so late in the season, and could not rest in the house. She pretended to herself she had some shopping to do in Pine-street, but it was rather a longing for air and motion that sent her out. Also, certain thoughts which she did not like, had of late been coming more frequently, and she found it easier to avoid them in the street. They were not such as troubled her from being hard to think out. Properly speaking, she *thought* less now than ever. She often said nice things, but they were mostly the mere gracious movements of a nature sweet,

playful, trusting, fond of all beautiful things, and quick to see artistic relation where her perception reached.

As she turned the corner of Mr. Drew's shop, the house-door opened, and a lady came out. It was Mr. Drew's lodger. Juliet knew nothing about her, and was not aware that she had ever seen her; but the lady stared as if she recognized her. To that kind of thing Juliet was accustomed, for her style of beauty was anything but common. The lady's regard however was so fixed that it drew hers, and as their eyes met, Juliet felt something, almost a physical pain, shoot through her heart. She could not understand it, but presently began to suspect, and by degrees became quite certain that she had seen her before, though she could not tell where. The effect the sight of her had had, indicated some painful association, which she must recall before she could be at rest. She turned in the other direction, and walked straight from the town, that she might think without eyes upon her.

Scene after scene of her life came back as she searched to find some circumstance associated

with that face. Once and again she seemed on the point of laying hold of something, when the face itself vanished and she had that to recall, and the search to resume from the beginning. In the process many painful memories arose, some, connected with her mother, unhappy in themselves, others, connected with her father, grown unhappy from her marriage; for thereby she had built a wall between her thoughts and her memories of him; and, if there should be a life beyond this, had hollowed a gulf between them for ever.

Gradually her thoughts took another direction.—Could it be that already the glamour had begun to disperse, the roses of love to wither, the magic to lose its force, the common look of things to return? Paul was as kind, as courteous, as considerate as ever, and yet there was a difference. Her heart did not grow wild, her blood did not rush to her face, when she heard the sounds of his horse's hoofs in the street, though she knew them instantly. Sadder and sadder grew her thoughts as she walked along, careless whither.

Had she begun to cease loving? No. She loved better than she knew, but she must love infinitely better yet. The first glow was gone —already: she had thought it would not go, and was miserable. She recalled that even her honeymoon had a little disappointed her. I would not be mistaken as implying that any of these her reflections had their origin in what was *peculiar* in the character, outlook, or speculation of herself or her husband. The passion of love is but the vestibule—the pylon—to the temple of love. A garden lies between the pylon and the adytum. They that will enter the sanctuary must walk through the garden. But some start to see the roses already withering, sit down and weep and watch their decay, until at length the aged flowers hang drooping all around them, and lo! their hearts are withered also, and when they rise they turn their backs on the holy of holies, and their feet towards the gate.

Juliet was proud of her Paul, and loved him as much as she was yet capable of loving. But she had thought they were enough for each

other, and already, although she was far from acknowledging it to herself, she had, in the twilight of her thinking, begun to doubt it. Nor can she be blamed for the doubt. Never man and woman yet succeeded in being all in all to each other.

It were presumption to say that a lonely God would be enough for himself, seeing that we can know nothing of God but as he is our Father. What if the creator himself is sufficient to himself in virtue of his self-existent *creatorship*? Let my reader think it out. The lower we go in the scale of creation, the more independent is the individual. The richer and more perfect each of a married pair is in the other relations of life, the more is each to the other. For us, the children of eternal love, the very air our spirits breathe, and without which they cannot live, is the eternal life; for us, the brothers and sisters of a countless family, the very space in which our souls can exist, is the love of each and every soul of our kind.

Such were not Juliet's thoughts. To her such would have seemed as unreal as unintelligible. To her they would have looked

just what some of my readers will pronounce them, not in the least knowing what they are. She was suddenly roused from her painful reverie by the pulling up of Helen's ponies, with much clatter and wriggling recoil, close beside her, making more fuss with their toy-carriage than the mightiest of tractive steeds with the chariot of pomp.

"Jump in, Juliet," cried their driver, addressing her with the greater *abandon* that she was resolved no stiffness on her part should deposit a grain to the silting up of the channel of former affection. She was one of the few who understand that no being can afford to let the smallest love-germ die.

Juliet hesitated. She was not a little bewildered with the sudden recall from the moony plains of memory, and the demand for immediate action. She answered uncertainly, trying to think what was involved.

"I know your husband is not waiting you at home," pursued Helen. "I saw him on Ruber, three fields off, riding away from Glaston. Jump in, dear. You can make up that mind of yours in the carriage as well as upon the road.

I will set you down wherever you please. My husband is out too, so the slaves can take their pleasure."

Juliet could not resist, had little inclination to do so, yielded without another word, and took her place beside Helen, a little shy of being alone with her, yet glad of her company. Away went the ponies, and as soon as she had got them settled to their work, Helen turned her face towards Juliet.

"I *am* so glad to see you!" she said.

Juliet's heart spoke too loud for her throat. It was a relief to her that Helen had to keep her eyes on her charge, the quickness of whose every motion rendered watchfulness right needful.

"Have you returned Mrs. Bevis's call yet?" asked Helen.

"No," murmured Juliet. "I haven't been able yet."

"Well, here is a good chance. Sit where you are, and you will be at Nestley in half an hour, and I shall be the more welcome. You are a great favourite there!"

"How kind you are!" said Juliet, the tears

beginning to rise. "Indeed, Mrs. Wingfold——"

"You *used* to call me Helen!" said that lady, pulling up her ponies with sudden energy, as they shied at a bit of paper on the road, and nearly had themselves and all they drew in the ditch.

"May I call you so still?"

"Surely! What else?"

"You are too good to me!" said Juliet, and wept outright.

"My dear Juliet," returned Helen, "I will be quite plain with you, and that will put things straight in a moment. Your friends understand perfectly why you have avoided them of late, and are quite sure it is from no unkindness to any of them. But neither must you imagine we think hardly of you for marrying Mr. Faber. We detest his opinions so much that we feel sure if you saw a little farther into them, neither of you would hold them."

"But I don't—that is, I——"

"You don't know whether you hold them or not: I understand quite well. My husband says in your case it does not matter much; for

if you had ever really believed in Jesus Christ, you could not have done it. At all events now the thing is done, there is no question about it left. Dear Juliet, think of us as your friends still, who will always be glad to see you, and ready to help you where we can."

Juliet was weeping for genuine gladness now. But even as she wept, by one of those strange movements of our being which those who have been quickest to question them wonder at the most, it flashed upon her where she had seen the lady that came from Mr. Drew's house, and her heart sunk within her, for the place was associated with that portion of her history which of all she would most gladly hide from herself. During the rest of the drive she was so silent, that Helen at last gave up trying to talk to her. Then first she observed how the clouds had risen on all sides and were meeting above, and that the air was more still and sultry than ever.

Just as they got within Nestley-gate, a flash of lightning, scarcely followed by a loud thunder-clap, shot from overhead. The ponies plunged, reared, swayed asunder from the pole,

nearly fell, and recovered themselves only to dart off in wild terror. Juliet screamed.

"Don't be frightened, child," said Helen. "There is no danger here. The road is straight and there is nothing on it. I shall soon pull them up. Only don't cry out: that will be as little to their taste as the lightning."

Juliet caught at the reins.

"For God's sake, don't do that!" cried Helen, balking her clutch. "You will kill us both."

Juliet sunk back in her seat. The ponies went at full speed along the road. The danger was small, for the park was upon both sides, level with the drive, in which there was a slight ascent. Helen was perfectly quiet, and went on gradually tightening her pull upon the reins. Before they reached the house, she had entirely regained her command of them. When she drew up at the door, they stood quite steady, but panting as if their little sides would fly asunder. By this time Helen was red as a rose; her eyes were flashing, and a smile was playing about her mouth; but Juliet was like a lily on which the rain has been falling all night: her very lips were bloodless. When Helen

turned and saw her, she was far more frightened than the ponies could make her.

"Why, Juliet, my dear!" she said, "I had no thought you were so terrified! What would your husband say to me for frightening you so! But you are safe now."

A servant came to take the ponies. Helen got out first, and gave her hand to Juliet.

"Don't think me a coward, Helen," she said. "It was the thunder. I never could bear thunder."

"I should be far more of a coward than you are, Juliet," answered Helen, "if I believed, or even feared, that just a false step of little Zephyr there, or one plunge more from Zoe, might wipe out the world, and I should never more see the face of my husband."

She spoke eagerly, lovingly, believingly. Juliet shivered, stopped, and laid hold of the baluster rail. Things had been too much for her that day. She looked so ill that Helen was again alarmed, but she soon came to herself a little, and they went on to Mrs. Bevis's room. She received them most kindly, made Mrs. Faber lie on the sofa, covered her over, for she

was still trembling, and got her a glass of wine. But she could not drink it, and lay sobbing in vain endeavour to control herself.

Meantime the clouds gathered thicker and thicker: the thunder-peal that frightened the ponies had been but the herald of the storm, and now it came on in earnest. The rain rushed suddenly on the earth, and as soon as she heard it, Juliet ceased to sob. At every flash, however, although she lay with her eyes shut, and her face pressed into the pillow, she shivered and moaned.—"Why should one," thought Helen, "who is merely and only the child of Nature, find herself so little at home with her?"—Presently Mr. Bevis came running in from the stable, drenched in crossing to the house. As he passed to his room, he opened the door of his wife's, and looked in.

"I am glad to see you safely housed, ladies," he said. "You must make up your minds to stay where you are. It will not clear before the moon rises, and that will be about midnight. I will send John to tell your husbands that you are not cowering under a hedge, and will not be home to-night."

He was a good weather-prophet. The rain went on. In the evening the two husbands appeared, dripping. They had come on horseback together, and would ride home again after dinner. The doctor would have to be out the greater part of the Sunday, and would gladly leave his wife in such good quarters; the curate would walk out to his preaching in the evening, and drive home with Helen after it, taking Juliet, if she should be able to accompany them.

After dinner, when the ladies had left them, between the two clergymen and the doctor arose the conversation of which I will now give the substance, leaving the commencement, and taking it up at an advanced point.

"Now tell me," said Faber, in the tone of one satisfied he must be allowed in the right, "which is the nobler—to serve your neighbour in the hope of a future, believing in a God who will reward you, or to serve him in the dark, obeying your conscience, with no other hope than that those who come after you will be the better for you."

"I allow most heartily," answered Wingfold,

"and with all admiration, that it is indeed grand in one hopeless for himself to live well for the sake of generations to come, which he will never see, and which will never hear of him. But I will not allow that there is anything grand in being hopeless for oneself, or in serving the unseen rather than those about you, seeing it is easier to work for those who cannot oppose you, than to endure the contradiction of sinners. But I know you agree with me that the best way to assist posterity is to be true to your contemporaries, so there I need say no more—except that the hopeless man can do the least for his fellows, being unable to give them anything that should render them other than hopeless themselves; and if, for the grandeur of it, a man were to cast away his purse in order to have the praise of parting with the two mites left in his pocket, you would simply say the man was a fool. This much seems to me clear, that, if there be no God, it may be nobler to be able to live without one; but, if there be a God, it must be nobler not to be able to live without him. The moment, however, that nobility becomes the object in

any action, that moment the nobleness of the action vanishes. The man who serves his fellow that he may himself be noble, misses the mark. He alone who follows the truth, not he who follows nobility, shall attain the noble. A man's nobility will, in the end, prove just commensurate with his humanity—with the love he bears his neighbour—not the amount of work he may have done for him. A man might throw a lordly gift to his fellow, like a bone to a dog, and damn himself in the deed. You may insult a dog by the way you give him his bone."

"I dispute nothing of all that," said Faber—while good Mr. Bevis sat listening hard, not quite able to follow the discussion; "but I know you will admit that to do right from respect to any reward whatever, hardly amounts to doing right at all."

"I doubt if any man ever did or could do a thing worthy of passing as in itself good, for the sake of a reward," rejoined Wingfold. "Certainly, to do good for something else than good, is not good at all. But perhaps a reward may so influence a low nature as to bring it a little into contact with what is good, whence

the better part of it may make some acquaintance with good. Also, the desire of the approbation of the Perfect, might nobly help a man who was finding his duty hard, for it would humble as well as strengthen him, and is but another form of the love of the good. The praise of God will always humble a man, I think."

"There you are out of my depth," said Faber. "I know nothing about that."

"I go on then to say," continued the curate, "that a man may well be strengthened and encouraged by the hope of being made a better and truer man, and capable of greater self-forgetfulness and devotion. There is nothing low in having respect to such a reward as that, is there?"

"It seems to me better," persisted the doctor, "to do right for the sake of duty, than for the sake of any goodness even that will come thereby to yourself."

"Assuredly, if self in the goodness, and not the goodness itself be the object," assented Wingfold. "When a duty lies before one, self ought to have no part in the gaze we fix upon

it; but when thought reverts upon himself, who would avoid the wish to be a better man? The man who will not do a thing for duty, will never get so far as to derive any help from the hope of goodness. But duty itself is only a stage towards something better. It is but the impulse, God-given I believe, towards a far more vital contact with the truth. We shall one day forget all about duty, and do everything from the love of the loveliness of it, the satisfaction of the rightness of it. What would you say to a man who ministered to the wants of his wife and family only from duty? Of course you wish heartily that the man who neglects them would do it from any cause, even were it fear of the whip; but the strongest and most operative sense of duty would not satisfy you in such a relation. There are depths within depths of righteousness. Duty is the only path to freedom, but that freedom is the love that is beyond and prevents duty."

"But," said Faber, "I have heard you say that to take from you your belief in a God would be to render you incapable of action. Now, the man—I don't mean myself, but the

sort of man for whom I stand up—does act, does his duty, without the strength of that belief: is he not then the stronger?—Let us drop the word *noble*."

"In the case supposed, he would be the stronger—for a time at least," replied the curate. "But you must remember that to take from me the joy and glory of my life, namely the belief that I am the child of God, an heir of the infinite, with the hope of being made perfectly righteous, loving like God himself, would be something more than merely reducing me to the level of a man who had never loved God, or seen in the possibility of him anything to draw him. I should have lost the mighty dream of a universe; he would be what and where he chose to be, and might well be the more capable. Were I to be convinced there is no God, and to recover by the mere force of animal life from the prostration into which the conviction cast me, I should, I hope, try to do what duty was left me, for I too should be filled, for a time at least, with an endless pity for my fellows; but all would be so dreary, that I should be almost paralyzed for serving them, and should

long for death to do them and myself the only good service. The thought of the generations doomed to be born into a sunless present, would almost make me join any conspiracy to put a stop to the race. I should agree with Hamlet that the whole thing had better come to an end. Would it necessarily indicate a lower nature, or condition, or habit of thought, that, having cherished such hopes, I should, when I lost them, be more troubled than one who never had had them?"

"Still," said Faber, "I ask you to allow that a nature which can do without help is greater than a nature which cannot."

"If the thing done were the same, I should allow it," answered the curate; "but the things done will prove altogether different. And another thing to be noted is, that, while the need of help might indicate a lower nature, the capacity for receiving it must indicate a higher. The mere fact of being able to live and act in more meagre spiritual circumstances, in itself proves nothing: it is not the highest nature that has the fewest needs. The highest nature

is the one that has the most necessities, but the fewest of its own making. He is not the greatest man who is the most independent, but he who thirsts most after a conscious harmony with every element and portion of the mighty whole; demands from every region thereof its influences to perfect his individuality; regards that individuality as his kingdom, his treasure, not to hold but to give; sees in his Self the one thing he can devote, the one precious means of freedom by its sacrifice, and that in no contempt or scorn, but in love to God and his children, the multitudes of his kind. By dying ever thus, ever thus losing his soul, he lives like God, and God knows him, and he knows God. This is too good to be grasped, but not too good to be true. The highest is that which needs the highest, the largest that which needs the most; the finest and strongest that which to live must breathe essential life, self-willed life, God himself. It follows that it is not the largest or the strongest nature that will feel a loss the least. An ant will not gather a grain of corn the less that his mother is dead, while

a boy will turn from his books and his play and his dinner because his bird is dead: is the ant therefore the stronger nature?"

"Is it not weak to be miserable?" said the doctor.

"Yes—without good cause," answered the curate. "But you do not know what it would be to me to lose my faith in God. My misery would be a misery to which no assurance of immortality or of happiness could bring anything but tenfold misery—the conviction that I should never be good myself, never have anything to love absolutely, never be able to make amends for the wrongs I had done. Call such a feeling selfish if you will; I cannot help it. I cannot count one fit for existence to whom such things would be no grief. The worthy existence must hunger after good. The largest nature must have the mightiest hunger. Who calls a man selfish because he is hungry? He is selfish if he broods on the pleasures of eating, and would not go without his dinner for the sake of another; but if he had no hunger, where would be the room for his self-denial? Besides, in spiritual things, the only way to give them to

your neighbours is to hunger after them yourself. There each man is a mouth to the body of the whole creation. It cannot be selfishness to hunger and thirst after righteousness, which righteousness is just your duty to your God and your neighbour. If there be any selfishness in it, the very answer to your prayer will destroy it."

"There you are again out of my region," said Faber. "But answer me one thing: is it not weak to desire happiness?"

"Yes; if the happiness is poor and low," rejoined Wingfold. "But the man who would choose even the grandeur of duty before the bliss of the truth, must be a lover of himself. Such a man must be travelling the road to death. If there be a God, truth must be joy. If there be not, truth may be misery.—But, honestly, I know not one advanced Christian who tries to obey for the hope of heaven or the fear of hell. Such ideas have long vanished from such a man. He loves God; he loves truth; he loves his fellow, and knows he must love him more. You judge of Christianity either by those who are no true representatives of it,

and are indeed less of Christians than yourself; or by others who, being intellectually inferior, perhaps even stupid, belie Christ with their dull theories concerning him. Yet the latter may have in them a noble seed, urging them up heights to you at present unconceived and inconceivable; while, in the meantime, some of them serve their generation well, and do as much for those that are to come after as you do yourself."

"There is always weight as well as force in what you urge, Wingfold," returned Faber. "Still it looks to me just a cunningly devised fable—I will not say of the priests, but of the human mind deceiving itself with its own hopes and desires."

"It may well look such to those who are outside of it, and it must at length appear such to all who, feeling in it any claim upon them, yet do not put it to the test of their obedience."

"Well, you have had your turn, and now we are having ours—you of the legends, we of the facts."

"No," said Wingfold, "we have not had our turn, and you have been having yours for a far

longer time than we. But if, as you profess, you are *doing* the truth you see, it belongs to my belief that you will come to see the truth you do not see. Christianity is not a failure; for to it mainly is the fact owing that here is a class of men which, believing in no God, yet believes in duty towards men. Look here: if Christianity be the outcome of human aspiration, the natural growth of the human soil, is it not strange it should be such an utter failure as it seems to you? and as such a natural growth, it must be a failure, for if it were a success, must not you be the very one to see it? If it is false, it is worthless, or an evil: where then is your law of development, if the highest result of that development is an evil to the nature and the race?"

"I do not grant it the highest result," said Faber. "It is a failure—a false blossom, with a truer to follow."

"To produce a superior architecture, poetry, music?"

"Perhaps not. But a better science."

"Are the architecture and poetry and music parts of the failure?"

"Yes—but they are not altogether a failure, for there lay some truth at the root of them all. Now we shall see what will come of turning away from everything we do not *know*."

"That is not exactly what you mean, for that would be never to know anything more. But the highest you have in view is immeasurably below what Christianity has always demanded of its followers."

"But has never got from them, and never will. Look at the wars, the hatreds, to which your *gospel* has given rise! Look at Calvin and poor Servetus! Look at the strifes and divisions of our own day! Look at the religious newspapers!"

"All granted. It is a chaos, the motions of whose organization must be strife. The spirit of life is at war with the spasmatical body of death. If Christianity be not still in the process of development, it is the saddest of all failures."

"The fact is, Wingfold, your prophet would have been king of the race if he had not believed in a God."

"I dare not speak the answer that rises to

my lips," said Wingfold. "But there is more truth in what you say than you think, and more of essential lie also. My answer is, that the faith of Jesus in his God and Father is, even now, saving me, setting me free from my one horror, selfishness; making my life an unspeakable boon to me, letting me know its roots in the eternal and perfect; giving me such love to my fellow, that I trust at last to love him as Christ has loved me. But I do not expect you to understand me. He in whom I believe said that a man must be born again to enter into the kingdom of heaven."

The doctor laughed.

"You then *are* one of the double-born, Wingfold?" he said.

"I believe, I think, I hope so," replied the curate, very gravely.

"And you, Mr. Bevis?"

"I don't know. I wish. I doubt," answered the rector, with equal solemnity.

"Oh, never fear!" said Faber, with a quiet smile, and rising, left the clergymen together.

But what a morning it was that came up after the storm! All night the lightning had

been flashing itself into peace, and gliding farther and farther away. Bellowing and growling the thunder had crept with it; but long after it could no more be heard, the lightning kept gleaming up, as if from a sea of flame behind the horizon. The sun brought a glorious day, and looked larger and mightier than before. To Helen, as she gazed eastward from her window, he seemed ascending his lofty pulpit to preach the story of the day named after him—the story of the Sun-day; the rising again in splendour of the darkened and buried Sun of the universe, with whom all the worlds and all their hearts and suns arose. A light steam was floating up from the grass, and the rain-drops were sparkling everywhere. The day had arisen from the bosom of the night; peace and graciousness from the bosom of the storm; she herself from the grave of her sleep, over which had lain the turf of the darkness; and all was fresh life and new hope. And through it all, reviving afresh with every sign of Nature's universal law of birth, was the consciousness that her life, her own self, was rising from the dead, was being new-born also. She

had not far to look back to the time when all was dull and dead in her being; when the earthquake came, and the storm, and the fire; and after them the still small voice, breathing rebuke, and hope, and strength. Her whole world was now radiant with expectation. It was through her husband the change had come to her, but he was not the rock on which she built. For his sake she could go to hell—yea, cease to exist; but there was one whom she loved more than him—the one whose love was the self-willed cause of all love, who from that love had sent forth her husband and herself to love one another; whose heart was the nest of their birth, the cradle of their growth, the rest of their being. Yea more than her husband she loved him, her elder brother, by whom the Father had done it all, the man who lived and died and rose again so many hundred years ago. In him, the perfect one, she hoped for a perfect love to her husband, a perfect nature in herself. She knew how Faber would have mocked at such a love, the very existence of whose object she could not prove, how mocked at the notion that his life even now was influencing hers.

She knew how he would say it was merely love and marriage that had wrought the change; but while she recognized them as forces altogether divine, she knew that not only was the Son of Man behind them, but that it was her obedience to him and her confidence in him that had wrought the red heart of the change in her. She knew that she would rather break with her husband altogether, than do one action contrary to the known mind and will of that man. Faber would call her faith a mighty, perhaps a lovely illusion: her life was an active waiting for the revelation of its object in splendour before the universe. The world seemed to her a grand march of resurrections—out of every sorrow springing the joy at its heart, without which it could not have been a sorrow; out of the troubles, and evils, and sufferings, and cruelties that clouded its history, ever arising the human race, the sons of God, redeemed in him who had been made subject to death that he might conquer Death for them and for his Father—a succession of mighty facts, whose meanings only God can evolve, only the obedient heart behold.

On such a morning, so full of resurrection, Helen was only a little troubled not to be one of her husband's congregation: she would take her New Testament, and spend the sunny day in the open air. In the evening he was coming, and would preach in the little chapel. If only Juliet might hear him too! But she would not ask her to go.

Juliet was better, for fatigue had compelled sleep. The morning brought her little hope, however, no sense of resurrection. A certain dead thing had begun to move in its coffin; she was utterly alone with it, and it made the world feel a tomb around her. Not all resurrections are the resurrection of life, though in the end they will be found, even to the lowest birth of the power of the enemy, to have contributed thereto. She did not get up to breakfast; Helen persuaded her to rest, and herself carried it to her. But she rose soon after, and declared herself quite well.

The rector drove to Glaston in his dogcart to read prayers. Helen went out into the park with her New Testament and George Herbert. Poor Juliet was left with Mrs. Bevis, who

happily could not be duller than usual, although it was Sunday. By the time the rector returned, bringing his curate with him, she was bored almost beyond endurance. She had not yet such a love of wisdom as to be able to bear with folly. The foolish and weak are the most easily disgusted with folly and weakness which is not of their own sort, and are the last to make allowances for them. To spend also the evening with the softly smiling old woman, who would not go across the grass after such a rain the night before, was a thing not to be contemplated. Juliet borrowed a pair of galoshes, and insisted on going to the chapel. In vain the rector and his wife dissuaded her. Neither Helen nor her husband said a word.

CHAPTER X.

A CONSCIENCE.

THE chapel in the park at Nestley, having as yet received no colour, and having no organ or choir, was a cold, uninteresting little place. It was neat, but had small beauty, and no history. Yet even already had begun to gather in the hearts of two or three of the congregation, a feeling of quiet sacredness about it: some soft airs of the spirit-wind had been wandering through their souls as they sat there and listened. And a gentle awe, from old associations with lay worship, stole like a soft twilight over Juliet as she entered. Even the antral dusk of an old reverence may help to form the fitting mood through which shall slide unhindered the still small voice that makes appeal to what of God is yet awake in the soul.

There were present about a score of villagers, and the party from the house.

Clad in no vestments of office, but holding in his hand the New Testament, which was always either there or in his pocket, Wingfold rose to speak. He read:

"*Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.*"

Then at once he began to show them, in the simplest interpretation, that the hypocrite was one who pretended to be what he was not; who tried or consented to look other and better than he was. That a man, from unwillingness to look at the truth concerning himself, might be but half-consciously assenting to the false appearance, would, he said, nowise serve to save him from whatever of doom was involved in this utterance of our Lord concerning the crime. These words of explanation and caution premised, he began at the practical beginning, and spoke a few forceful things on the necessity of absolute truth as to fact in every communication between man and man, telling

them that, so far as he could understand his words recorded, our Lord's objection to swearing lay chiefly in this, that it encouraged untruthfulness, tending to make a man's yea less than yea, his nay other than nay. He said that many people who told lies every day, would be shocked when they discovered that they were liars; and that their lying must be discovered, for the Lord said so. Every untruthfulness was a passing hypocrisy, and if they would not come to be hypocrites out and out, they must begin to avoid it by speaking every man the truth to his neighbour. If they did not begin at once to speak the truth, they must grow worse and worse liars. The Lord called hypocrisy *leaven*, because of its irresistible, perhaps as well its unseen, growth and spread; he called it the leaven *of the Pharisees*, because it was the all-pervading quality of their being, and from them was working moral dissolution in the nation, eating like a canker into it, by infecting with like hypocrisy all who looked up to them.

"Is it not a strange drift this of men," said the curate, "to hide what is, under the veil of

what is not? to seek refuge in lies, as if that which *is* not, could be an armour of adamant? to run from the daylight for safety, deeper into the cave? In the cave house the creatures of the night—the tigers and hyænas, the serpent and the old dragon of the dark; in the light are true men and women, and the clear-eyed angels. But the reason is only too plain; it is, alas! that they are themselves of the darkness and not of the light. They do not fear their own. They are more comfortable with the beasts of darkness than with the angels of light. They dread the peering of holy eyes into their hearts; they feel themselves naked and fear to be shamed, therefore cast the garment of hypocrisy about them. They have that in them so strange to the light that they feel it must be hidden from the eye of day, as a thing *hideous*, that is, a thing to be hidden. But the hypocrisy is worse than all it would hide. That they have to hide again, as a more hideous thing still.

"God hides nothing. His very work from the beginning is *revelation*—a casting aside of veil after veil, a showing unto men of truth

after truth. On and on, from fact to fact divine he advances, until at length in his Son Jesus, he unveils his very face. Then begins a fresh unveiling, for the very work of the Father is the work the Son himself has to do—to reveal. His life was the unveiling of himself, and the unveiling of the Son is still going on, and is that for the sake of which the world exists. When he is unveiled, that is, when we know the Son, we shall know the Father also. The whole of creation, its growth, its history, the gathering total of human existence, is an unveiling of the Father. He is the life, the eternal life, the *Only*. I see it—ah! believe me —I see it as I cannot say it. From month to month it grows upon me. The lovely home-light, the one essence of peaceful being, is God himself.

"He loves light and not darkness, therefore shines, therefore reveals. True, there are infinite gulfs in him, into which our small vision cannot pierce, but they are gulfs of light, and the truths there are invisible only through excess of their own clarity. There is a darkness that comes of effulgence, and the most veiling

of all veils is the light. That for which the eye exists is light, but *through* light no human eye can pierce.—I find myself beyond my depth. I am ever beyond my depth, afloat in an infinite sea; but the depth of the sea knows me, for the ocean of my being is God.—What I would say is this, that the light is not blinding because God would hide, but because the truth is too glorious for our vision. The effulgence of himself God veiled that he might unveil it—in his Son. Inter-universal spaces, æons, eternities—what word of vastness you can find or choose—take unfathomable darkness itself, if you will, to express the infinitude of God, that original splendour existing only to the consciousness of God himself—I say he hides it not, but is revealing it ever, for ever, at all cost of labour, yea of pain to himself. His whole creation is a sacrificing of himself to the being and well-being of his little ones, that, being wrought out at last into partakers of his divine nature, that nature may be revealed in them to their divinest bliss. He brings hidden things out of the light of his own being into the light of ours.

"But see how different *we* are—until we learn of him! See the tendency of man to conceal his treasures, to claim even truth as his own by discovery, to hide it and be proud of it, gloating over that which he thinks he has in himself, instead of groaning after the infinite of God! We would be for ever heaping together possessions, dragging things into the cave of our finitude, our individual self, not perceiving that the things which pass that dreariest of doors, whatever they may have been, are thenceforth but 'straws, small sticks, and dust of the floor.' When a man would have a truth in thither as if it were of private interpretation, he drags in only the bag which the truth, remaining outside, has burst and left.

"Nowhere are such children of darkness born as in the caves of hypocrisy; nowhere else can a man revel with such misshapen hybrids of religion and sin. But, as one day will be found, I believe, a strength of physical light before which even solid gold or blackest marble becomes transparent, so is there a spiritual light before which all veils of falsehood shall shrivel up and perish and cease to hide; so

that, in individual character, in the facts of being, in the densest of Pharisaical hypocrisy, there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nothing hid that shall not be known.

"If then, brother or sister, thou hast that which would be hidden, make haste and drag the thing from its covert into the presence of thy God, thy light, thy saviour, that, if it be in itself good, it may be cleansed, if evil, it may be stung through and through with the burning arrows of truth, and perish in glad relief. For the one bliss of an evil thing is to perish and pass; the evil thing, and that alone, is the natural food of Death—nothing else will agree with the monster. If we have such foul things, I say, within the circumference of our known selves, we must confess the charnel-fact to ourselves and to God; and if there be any one else who has a claim to know it, to that one also must we confess, casting out the vile thing that we may be clean. Let us make haste to open the doors of our lips and the windows of our humility, to let out the demon of darkness, and in the angels of light—so abjuring the evil. Be sure that concealment is utterly, absolutely

hopeless. If we do not thus ourselves open our house, the day will come when a roaring blast of his wind, or the flame of his keen lightning, will destroy every defence of darkness, and set us shivering before the universe in our naked vileness; for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known. Ah, well for man that he cannot hide! What vaults of uncleanness, what sinks of deathful horrors, would not the souls of some of us grow! But for every one of them, as for the universe, comes the day of cleansing. Happy they who hasten it! who open wide the doors, take the broom in the hand, and begin to sweep! The dust may rise in clouds; the offence may be great; the sweeper may pant, and choke, and weep, yea, grow faint and sick with self-disgust; but the end will be a clean house, and the light and wind of heaven shining and blowing clear and fresh and sweet through all its chambers. Better so, than have a hurricane from God burst in door and windows, and sweep from his temple with the besom of destruction everything that loveth and maketh a lie. Brothers, sisters, let us be

clean. The light and the air around us are God's vast purifying furnace: out into it let us cast all hypocrisy. Let us be open-hearted, and speak every man the truth to his neighbour. Amen."

The faces of the little congregation had been staring all the time at the speaker's, as the flowers of a little garden stare at the sun. Like a white lily that had begun to fade, that of Juliet had drawn the eyes of the curate, as the whitest spot always will. But it had drawn his heart also. Had her troubles already begun, poor girl! he thought. Had the sweet book of marriage already begun to give out its bitterness?

It was not just so. Marriage was good to her still. Not yet, though but a thing of this world, as she and her husband were agreed, had it begun to grow stale and wearisome. She was troubled. It was with no reaction against the opinions to which she had practically yielded; but not the less had the serpent of the truth bitten her, for it can bite through the gauze of whatever opinions or theories. Conscious, persistent wrong may harden and thicken

the gauze to a quilted armour, but even through that the sound of its teeth may wake up Don Worm, the conscience, and then is the baser nature between the fell incensed points of mighty opposites. It avails a man little to say he does not believe this or that, if the while he cannot rest because of some word spoken. True speech, as well as true scripture, is given by inspiration of God; it goes forth on the wind of the spirit, with the ministry of fire. The sun will shine, and the wind will blow, the floods will beat, and the fire will burn, until the yielding soul, re-born into childhood, spreads forth its hands and rushes to the Father.

It was dark, and Juliet took the offered arm of the rector, and walked with him towards the house. Both were silent, for both had been touched. The rector was busy tumbling over the contents now of this now of that old chest and cabinet in the lumber-room of his memory, seeking for things to get rid of by holy confession ere the hour of proclamation should arrive. He was finding little yet beyond boyish escapades, and faults and sins which he had abjured ages ago and almost forgotten. His great

sin, of which he had already repented, and was studying more and more to repent—that of undertaking holy service for the sake of the loaves and the fishes—then, in natural sequence, only taking the loaves and the fishes, and doing no service in return, did not come under the name of hypocrisy, being indeed a crime patent to the universe, even when hidden from himself. When at length the heavy lids of his honest sleepy-eyed nature arose, and he saw the truth of his condition, his dull, sturdy soul had gathered itself like an old wrestler to the struggle, and hardly knew what was required of it, or what it had to overthrow, till it stood panting over its adversary.

Juliet also was occupied—with no such search as the rector's, hardly even with what could be called thought, but with something that must either soon cause the keenest thought, or at length a spiritual callosity: somewhere in her was a motion, a something turned and twisted, ceased and began again, boring like an augre; or was it a creature that tried to sleep, but ever and anon started awake, and with fretful claws

pulled at its nest in the fibres of her heart?

The curate and his wife talked softly all the way back to the house.

"Do you really think," said Helen, "that every fault one has ever committed will one day be trumpeted out to the universe?"

"That were hardly worth the while of the universe," answered her husband. "Such an age-long howling of evil stupidities would be enough to turn its brain with ennui and disgust. Nevertheless, the hypocrite will certainly know himself discovered, and shamed, and unable any longer to hide himself from his neighbour. His past deeds also will be made plain to all who, for further ends of rectification, require to know them. Shame will then, I trust, be the first approach of his redemption."

Juliet, for she was close behind them, heard his words, and shuddered.

"You are feeling it cold, Mrs. Faber," said the rector, and, with the fatherly familiarity of an old man, drew her cloak better around her.

"It is not cold," she faltered; "but somehow the night-air always makes me shiver."

The rector pulled a muffler from his coat-

pocket, and laid it like a scarf on her shoulders.

"How kind you are!" she murmured. "I don't deserve it."

"Who deserves anything?" said the rector. "I less, I am sure, than any one I know. Only, if you will believe my curate, you have but to ask and have what you need."

"I wasn't the first to say that, sir," Wingfold struck in, turning his head over his shoulder.

"I know that, my boy," answered Mr. Bevis; "but you were the first to make me want to find it true.—I say, Mrs. Faber, what if it should turn out after all, that there was a grand treasure hid in your field and mine, that we never got the good of because we didn't believe it was there and dig for it? What if this scatter-brained curate of mine should be right when he talks so strangely about our living in the midst of calling voices, cleansing fires, baptizing dews, and *won't* hearken, won't be clean, won't give up our sleep and our dreams for the very bliss for which we cry out in them!"

The old man had stopped, taken off his hat, and turned towards her. He spoke with such a strange solemnity of voice that it could hardly

have been believed his by those who knew him as a judge of horses and not as a reader of prayers. The other pair had stopped also.

"I should call it very hard," returned Juliet, "to come so near it and yet miss it."

"Especially to be driven so near it against one's will, and yet succeed in getting past without touching it," said the curate, with a flavour of asperity. His wife gently pinched his arm, and he was ashamed.

When they reached home, Juliet went straight to bed—or at least to her room for the night.

"I say, Wingfold," remarked the rector, as they sat alone after supper, "that sermon of yours was above your congregation."

"I am afraid you are right, sir. I am sorry. But if you had seen their faces as I did, perhaps you would have modified the conclusion."

"I am very glad I heard it, though," said the rector.

They had more talk, and when Wingfold went upstairs, he found Helen asleep. Annoyed with himself for having spoken harshly to Mrs. Faber, and more than usually harassed by a sense of failure in his sermon, he threw himself

into a chair, and sat brooding and praying till the light began to appear. Out of the reeds shaken all night in the wind, rose with the morning this bird:—

THE SMOKE.

Lord, I have laid my heart upon thy altar,
But cannot get the wood to burn;
It hardly flares ere it begins to falter,
And to the dark return.

Old sap, or night-fallen dew, has damped the fuel;
In vain my breath would flame provoke;
Yet see—at every poor attempt's renewal
To thee ascends the smoke.

'Tis all I have—smoke, failure, foiled endeavour,
Coldness, and doubt, and palsied lack:
Such as I have I send thee;—perfect giver,
Send thou thy lightning back.

In the morning, as soon as breakfast was over, Helen's ponies were brought to the door, she and Juliet got into the carriage, Wingfold jumped up behind, and they returned to Glaston. Little was said on the way, and Juliet seemed strangely depressed. They left her at her own door.

"What did that look mean?" said Wingfold to his wife, the moment they were round the corner of Mr. Drew's shop.

"You saw it then?" returned Helen. "I did not think you had been so quick."

"I saw what I could not help taking for relief," said the curate, "when the maid told her that her husband was not at home."

They said no more till they reached the rectory, where Helen followed her husband to his study.

"He can't have turned tyrant already!" she said, resuming the subject of Juliet's look. "But she's afraid of him."

"It did look like it," rejoined her husband. "Oh, Helen, what a hideous thing fear of her husband must be for a woman, who has to spend not her days only in his presence, but her nights by his side! I do wonder so many women dare to be married. They would need all to have clean consciences."

"Or no end of faith in their husbands," said Helen. "If ever I come to be afraid of you, it will be because I have done something very wrong indeed."

"Don't be too sure of that, Helen," returned Wingfold. "There are very decent husbands as husbands go, who are yet unjust, exacting,

selfish. The most devoted of wives are sometimes afraid of the men they yet consider the very models of husbands. It is a brutal shame that a woman should feel afraid, or even uneasy, instead of safe, beside her husband."

"You are always on the side of the women, Thomas," said his wife; "and I love you for it somehow—I can't tell why."

"You make a mistake to begin with, my dear: you don't love me because I am on the side of the women, but because I am on the side of the wronged. If the man happened to be the injured party, and I took the side of the woman, you would be down on me like an avalanche."

"I daresay. But there is something more in it. I don't think I am altogether mistaken. You don't talk like most men. They have such an ugly way of asserting superiority, and sneering at women! That you never do, and as a woman I am grateful for it."

The same afternoon Dorothy Drake paid a visit to Mrs. Faber, and was hardly seated before the feeling that something was wrong arose in her. Plainly Juliet was suffering—

from some cause she wished to conceal. Several times she seemed to turn faint, hurriedly fanned herself, and drew a deep breath. Once she rose hastily and went to the window, as if struggling with some oppression, and returned looking very pale.

Dorothy was frightened.

"What is the matter, dear?" she said.

"Nothing," answered Juliet, trying to smile. "Perhaps I took a little cold last night," she added with a shiver.

"Have you told your husband?" asked Dorothy.

"I haven't seen him since Saturday," she answered quietly, but a pallor almost deathly overspread her face.

"I hope he will soon be home," said Dorothy. "Mind you tell him how you feel the instant he comes in."

Juliet answered with a smile, but that smile Dorothy never forgot. It haunted her all the way home. When she entered her chamber, her eyes fell upon the petal of a monthly rose, which had dropped from the little tree in her window, and lay streaked and crumpled on the

black earth of the flower-pot: by one of those queer mental vagaries in which the imagination and the logical faculty seem to combine to make sport of the reason—"How is it that smile has got here before me?" she said to herself.

She sat down and thought. Could it be that Juliet had, like herself, begun to find there could be no peace without the knowledge of an absolute peace? If it were so, and she would but let her know it, then, sisters at least in sorrow and search, they would together seek the father of their spirits, if haply they might find him; together they would cry to him—and often: it might be he would hear them, and reveal himself. Her heart was sore all day, thinking of that sad face. Juliet, whether she knew it or not, was, like herself, in trouble because she had no God.

The conclusion shows that Dorothy was far from hopeless. That she could believe the lack of a God was the cause unknown to herself of her friend's depression, implies an assurance of the human need of a God, and a hope there might be one to be found. For herself, if she

could but find him, she felt there would be nothing but bliss evermore. Dorothy then was more hopeful than she herself knew. I doubt if absolute hopelessness is ever born save at the word, *Depart from me.* Hope springs with us from God himself, and, however down-beaten, however sick and nigh unto death, will evermore lift its head and rise again.

She could say nothing to her father. She loved him—oh, how dearly! and trusted him, where she could trust him at all—oh, how perfectly! but she had no confidence in his understanding of herself. The main cause whence arose his insufficiency and her lack of trust was, that his faith in God was as yet scarcely more independent of thought-forms, word-shapes, dogma and creed, than that of the Catholic or Calvinist. How few are there whose faith is simple and mighty in the Father of Jesus Christ, waiting to believe all that he will reveal to them! How many of those who talk of faith as the one needful thing, will accept as sufficient to the razing of the walls of partition between you and them, your heartiest declaration that you believe *in Him* with the

whole might of your nature, lay your soul bare to the revelation of his spirit, and stir up your will to obey him?—And then comes *your* temptation—to exclude, namely, from your love and sympathy the weak and boisterous brethren who, after the fashion possible to them, believe in your Lord, because they exclude you, and put as little confidence in your truth as in your insight. If you do know more of Christ than they, upon you lies the heavier obligation to be true to them, as was St. Paul to the Judaizing Christians, whom these so much resemble, who were his chief hindrance in the work his master had given him to do. In Christ we must forget Paul and Apollos and Cephas, pope and bishop and pastor and presbyter, creed and interpretation and theory. Careless of their opinions, we must be careful of themselves—careful that we have salt in ourselves, and that the salt lose not its savour, that the old man, dead through Christ, shall not vampire-like creep from his grave and suck the blood of the saints, by whatever name they be called, or however little they may yet have entered into the freedom of

the gospel that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

How was Dorothy to get nearer to Juliet, find out her trouble, and comfort her?

"Alas!" she said to herself, "what a thing is marriage for separating friends!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE OLD HOUSE OF GLASTON.

THE same evening Dorothy and her father walked to the Old House. Already the place looked much changed. The very day the deeds were signed, Mr. Drake, who was not the man to postpone action a moment after the time for it was come, had set men at work upon the substantial repairs. The house was originally so well built that these were not so heavy as might have been expected, and when completed they made little show of change. The garden, however, looked quite another thing, for it had lifted itself up from the wilderness in which it was suffocated, reviving like a repentant soul reborn. Under its owner's keen watch, its ancient plan had been rigidly re-

garded, its ancient features carefully retained. The old bushes were well trimmed, but as yet nothing live, except weeds, had been uprooted. The hedges and borders, of yew and holly and box, tall and broad, looked very bare and broken and patchy; but now that the shears had, after so long a season of neglect, removed the gathered shade, the naked stems and branches would again send out the young shoots of the spring, and new birth would begin everywhere, and the old garden would dawn anew. For all his lack of sympathy with the older forms of religious economy in the country, a thing, alas! too easy to account for, the minister yet loved the past and felt its mystery. He said once in a sermon—and it gave offence to more than one of his deacons, for they scented in it *Germanism*, —"The love of the past, the desire of the future, and the enjoyment of the present, make an eternity, in which time is absorbed, its lapse lapses, and man partakes of the immortality of his Maker. In each present personal being, we have the whole past of our generation enclosed, to be re-developed with endless difference in

each individuality. Hence perhaps it comes that, every now and then, into our consciousnesses float strange odours of feeling, strange tones as of by-gone affections, strange glimmers as of forgotten truths, strange mental sensations of indescribable sort and texture. Friends, I should be a terror to myself, did I not believe that wherever my dim consciousness may come to itself, God is there."

Dorothy would have hastened the lighter repairs inside the house as well, so as to get into it as soon as possible; but her father very wisely argued that it would be a pity to get the house in good condition, and then, as soon as they went into it, and began to find how it could be altered better to suit their tastes and necessities, have to destroy a great part of what had just been done. His plan, therefore, was to leave the house for the winter, now it was weather-tight, and with the first of the summer partly occupy it as it was, find out its faults and capabilities, and have it gradually repaired and altered to their minds and requirements. There would in this way be plenty of time to talk about everything, even to the merest

suggestion of fancy, and discover what they would really like.

But ever since the place had been theirs, Dorothy had been in the habit of going almost daily to the house, with her book and her work, sitting now in this, now in that empty room, undisturbed by the noises of the workmen, chiefly outside: the foreman was a member of her father's church, a devout man, and she knew every one of his people. She had taken a strange fancy to those empty rooms: perhaps she felt them like her own heart, waiting for something to come and fill them with life. Nor was there anything to prevent her, though the work was over for a time, from indulging herself in going there still, as often as she pleased, and she would remain there for hours, sometimes nearly the whole day. In her present condition of mind and heart, she desired and needed solitude: she was one of those who when troubled rush from their fellows, and, urged by the human instinct after the divine, seek refuge in loneliness—the cave on Horeb, the top of mount Sinai, the closet with shut door—any lonely place where, unseen, and

dreading no eye, the heart may call aloud to the God hidden behind the veil of the things that do appear.

How different, yet how fit to merge in a mutual sympathy, were the thoughts of the two, as they wandered about the place that evening! Dorothy was thinking her commonest thought—how happy she could be if only she knew there was a will central to the universe, willing all that came to her—good or seeming-bad—a Will whom she might love and thank for *all* things. He would be to her no God whom she could thank only when he sent her what was pleasant. She must be able to thank him for everything, or she could thank him for nothing.

Her father was saying to himself he could not have believed the lifting from his soul of such a gravestone of debt, would have made so little difference to his happiness. He fancied honest Jones, the butcher, had more mere pleasure from the silver snuff-box he had given him, than he had himself from his fortune. Relieved he certainly was, but the relief was not happiness. His debt had been the stone that

blocked up the gate of Paradise: the stone was rolled away, but the gate was not therefore open. He seemed for the first time beginning to understand what he had so often said, and in public too, and had thought he understood, that God himself, and not any or all of his gifts, is the life of a man. He had got rid of the dread imagination that God had given him the money in anger, as he had given the Israelites the quails, nor did he find that the possession formed any barrier between him and God: his danger now seemed that of forgetting the love of the giver in his anxiety to spend the gift according to his will.

"You and I ought to be very happy, my love," he said, as now they were walking home.

He had often said so before, and Dorothy had held her peace; but now, with her eyes on the ground, she rejoined, in a low, rather broken voice,

"Why, papa?"

"Because we are lifted above the anxiety that was crushing us into the very mud," he answered, with surprise at her question.

"It never troubled me so much as all that,"

she answered. "It is a great relief to see you free from it, father; but otherwise, I cannot say it has made much difference to me."

"My dear Dorothy," said the minister, "it is time we should understand each other. Your state of mind has for a long time troubled me; but while debt lay so heavy upon me I could give my attention to nothing else. Why should there be anything but perfect confidence between a father and a daughter who belong to each other alone in all the world? Tell me what it is that so plainly oppresses you. What prevents you from opening your heart to me? You cannot doubt my love."

"Never for one moment, father," she answered almost eagerly, pressing to her heart the arm on which she leaned. "I know I am safe with you because I am yours, and yet somehow I cannot get so close to you as I would. Something comes between us, and prevents me."

"What is it, my child? I will do all and everything I can to remove it."

"You dear father! I don't believe ever child had such a father."

"Oh yes, my dear! many have had better fathers, but none better than I hope one day by the grace of God to be to you. I am a poor creature, Dorothy, but I love you as my own soul. You are the blessing of my days, and my thoughts brood over you in the night: it would be in utter content, if only I saw you happy. If your face were acquainted with smiles, my heart would be acquainted with gladness."

For a time neither said anything more. The silent tears were streaming from Dorothy's eyes. At length she spoke.

"I wonder if I could tell you what it is without hurting you, father!" she said.

"I can hear anything from you, my child," he answered.

"Then I will try. But I do not think I shall ever quite know my father on earth, or quite be able to open my heart to him, until I have found my father in heaven."

"Ah, my child! is it so with you? Do you fear you have not yet given yourself to the Saviour? Give yourself now. His arms are ever open to receive you."

"That is hardly the point, father.—Will you let me ask you any question I please?"

"Assuredly, my child." He always spoke, though quite unconsciously, with a little of the *ex-cathedral* tone.

"Then tell me, father, are you just as sure of God as you are of me standing here before you?"

She had stopped and turned, and stood looking him full in the face with wide troubled eyes.

Mr. Drake was silent. Hateful is the professional, contemptible is the love of display, but in his case they floated only as vapours in the air of a genuine soul. He was a true man, and as he could not say *yes*, neither would he hide his *no* in a multitude of words—at least to his own daughter: he was not so sure of God as he was of that daughter, with those eyes looking straight into his! Could it be that he never had believed in God at all? The thought went through him with a great pang. It was as if the moon grew dark above him, and the earth withered under his feet. He stood before

his child like one whose hypocrisy had been proclaimed from the housetop.

"Are you vexed with me, father?" said Dorothy sadly.

"No, my child," answered the minister, in a voice of unnatural composure. "But you stand before me there like the very thought started out of my soul, alive and visible, to question its own origin."

"Ah, father!" cried Dorothy, "let us question our origin."

The minister never even heard the words.

"That very doubt, embodied there in my child, has, I now know, been haunting me, dogging me behind, ever since I began to teach others," he said, as if talking in his sleep. "Now it looks me in the face. Am I myself to be a castaway? Dorothy, I am *not* sure of God —not as I am sure of you, my darling."

He stood silent. His ear expected a low-voiced, sorrowful reply. He started at the tone of gladness in which Dorothy cried—

"Then, father, there is henceforth no cloud between us, for we are in the same cloud to-

gether! It does not divide us, it only brings us closer to each other. Help me, father: I am trying hard to find God. At the same time I confess I would rather not find him, than find him such as I have sometimes heard you represent him."

"It may well be," returned her father—the *ex-cathedral*, the professional tone had vanished utterly for the time, and he spoke with the voice of a humble true man—"—it may well be that I have done him wrong; for since now at my age I am compelled to allow that I am not sure of him, what more likely than that I may have been cherishing wrong ideas concerning him, and so not looking in the right direction for finding him?"

"Where did you get your notions of God, father—those, I mean, that you took with you to the pulpit?"

A year ago even, if he had been asked the same question, he would at once have answered, "From the word of God;" but now he hesitated, and some minutes passed before he began a reply. For he saw now that it was not from the Bible *he* had gathered them, whence soever

they had come first. He pondered and searched—and found that the real answer eluded him, hiding itself in a time beyond his earliest memory. It seemed plain, therefore, that the source whence first he began to draw those notions, right or wrong, must be the talk and behaviour of the house in which he was born, the words and carriage of his father and mother and their friends. Next source to that came the sermons he heard on Sundays, and the books given him to read. The Bible was one of those books, but from the first he read it through the notions with which his mind was already vaguely filled, and with the comments of his superiors around him. Then followed the books recommended at college, this author and that, and the lectures he heard there upon the attributes of God and the plan of salvation. The spirit of commerce in the midst of which he had been bred, did not occur to him as one of the sources.

But he had perceived enough. He opened his mouth and bravely answered her question as well as he could, not giving the Bible as the source from which he had taken any one of the

notions of God he had been in the habit of presenting.

"But mind," he added, "I do not allow that therefore my ideas must be incorrect. If they be second-hand, they may yet be true. I do admit that where they have continued only second-hand, they can have been of little value to me."

"What you allow, then, father," said Dorothy, "is that you have yourself taken none of your ideas direct from the fountain-head?"

"I am afraid I must confess it, my child—with this modification, that I have thought many of them over a good deal, and altered some of them not a little to make them fit the moulds of truth in my mind."

"I am so glad, father!" said Dorothy. "I was positively certain, from what I knew of you—which is more than any one else in this world, I do believe—that some of the things you said concerning God never could have risen in your own mind."

"They might be in the Bible for all that," said the minister, very anxious to be and speak the right thing. "A man's heart is

not to be trusted for correct notions of God."

"Nor yet for correct interpretation of the Bible, I should think," said Dorothy.

"True, my child," answered her father with a sigh, "—except as it be already a Godlike heart. The Lord says a bramble-bush cannot bring forth grapes."

"The notions you gathered of God from other people, must have come out of their hearts, father?"

"Out of somebody's heart."

"Just so," answered Dorothy.

"Go on, my child," said her father. "Let me understand clearly your drift."

"I have heard Mr. Wingfold say," returned Dorothy, "that however men may have been driven to form their ideas of God before Christ came, no man can, with thorough honesty, take the name of a Christian, whose ideas of the Father of men are gathered from any other field than the life, thought, words, deeds, of the only Son of that Father. He says it is not from the Bible as a book that we are to draw our ideas of God, but from the living Man into whose presence that book brings us, who is

alive now, and gives his spirit that they who read about him may understand what kind of being he is, and why he did as he did, and know him, in some possible measure, as he knows himself.—I can only repeat the lesson like a child."

"I suspect," returned the minister, "that I have been greatly astray. But after this, we will seek our Father together in our brother, Jesus Christ."

It was the initiation of a daily lesson together in the New Testament, which, while it drew their hearts closer to each other, drew them, with growing delight, nearer and nearer to the ideal of humanity, Jesus Christ, in whom shines the glory of its Father.

A man may look another in the face for a hundred years and not know him. Men *have* looked Jesus Christ in the face, and not known either him or his father. It was needful that he should appear, to begin the knowing of him, but speedily was his visible presence taken away, that it might not become, as assuredly it would have become, a veil to hide from men the Father of their spirits. Do you long for the

assurance of some sensible sign? Do you ask why no intellectual proof is to be had? I tell you that such would but delay, perhaps altogether impair for you, that better, that best, that only vision, into which at last your world must blossom—such a contact, namely, with the heart of God himself, such a perception of his being, and his absolute oneness with you, the child of his thought, the individuality softly parted from his spirit, yet living still and only by his presence and love, as, by its own radiance, will sweep doubt away for ever. Being then in the light and knowing it, the lack of intellectual proof concerning that which is too high for it, will trouble you no more than would your inability to silence a metaphysician who declared that you had no real existence. It is for the sake of such vision as God would give that you are denied such vision as you would have. The Father of our spirits is not content that we should know him as we know each other. There is a better, closer, nearer than any human way of knowing, and to that he is guiding us across all the swamps of our unteachableness, the seas of our faithlessness, the deserts of our ignorance.

Is it so very hard that we should have to wait for that which we cannot yet receive? Shall we complain of the shadows cast upon our souls by the hand and the napkin polishing their mirrors to the receiving of the more excellent glory? Have patience, children of the Father. Pray always, and do not faint. The mists and the storms and the cold will pass—the sun and the sky are for evermore. There were no volcanoes and no typhoons but for the warm heart of the earth, the soft garment of the air, and the lordly sun over all. The most loving of you cannot imagine how one day the love of the Father will make you love even your own.

Much trustful talk passed between father and daughter as they walked home: they were now nearer to each other than ever in their lives before.

"You don't mind my coming out here alone, papa?" said Dorothy, as, after a little chat with the gate-keeper, they left the park. "I have of late found it so good to be alone! I think I am beginning to learn to think."

"Do in everything just as you please, my child," said her father. "I can have no objec-

tion to what you see good. Only don't be so late as to make me anxious."

"I like coming early," said Dorothy. "These lovely mornings make me feel as if the struggles of life were over, and only a quiet old age were left."

The father looked anxiously at his daughter. Was she going to leave him? It smote him to the heart that he had done so little to make her life a blessed one. How hard no small portion of it had been! How worn and pale she looked! Why did she not show fresh and bright like other young women—Mrs. Faber for instance? He had not guided her steps into the way of peace! At all events he had not led her home to the house of wisdom and rest! Too good reason why—he had not himself yet found that home! Henceforth, for her sake as well as his own, he would besiege the heavenly grace with prayer.

The opening of his heart in confessional response to his daughter, proved one of those fresh starts in the spiritual life, of which a man needs so many as he climbs to the heavenly gates.

CHAPTER XII.

PAUL FABER'S DRESSING-ROOM.

FABER did not reach home till a few minutes before the dinner-hour. He rode into the stable-yard, entered the house by the surgery, and went straight to his dressing-room; for the roads were villainous, and Ruber's large feet had made a wonderful sight of his master, who respected his wife's carpet. At the same time he hoped, as it was so near dinner-time, to find her in her chamber. She had, however, already made her toilette, and was waiting his return in the drawing-room. Her heart made a false motion and stung her when she heard his steps pass the door and go upstairs, for generally he came to greet her the moment he entered the house.—Had he seen anybody? Had he heard anything?—It was ten dreadful

minutes before he came down, but he entered cheerily, with the gathered warmth of two days of pent-up affection. She did her best to meet him as if nothing had happened. For indeed what had happened—except her going to church? If nothing had taken place since she saw him—since she knew him—why such perturbation? Was marriage a slavery of the very soul, in which a wife was bound to confess everything to her husband, even to her most secret thoughts and feelings? Or was a husband lord not only over the present and future of his wife, but over her past also? Was she bound to disclose everything that lay in that past? If Paul made no claim upon her beyond the grave, could he claim back upon the dead past before he knew her, a period over which she had now no more control than over that when she would be but a portion of the material all?

But whatever might be Paul's theories of marriage, or claims upon his wife, it was enough for her miserable unrest that she was what is called a living soul, with a history, and what has come to be called a conscience—a

something, that is, as most people regard it, which has the power, and uses it, of making uncomfortable.

The existence of such questions as I have indicated, reveals that already between her and him there showed space, separation, non-contact: Juliet was too bewildered with misery to tell whether it was a cleft of a hair's breadth, or a gulf across which no cry could reach; this moment it seemed the one, the next the other. The knowledge which caused it, had troubled her while he sought her love, had troubled her on the very eve of her surrender. The deeper her love grew, the more fiercely she wrestled with the evil fact. A low moral development and the purest resolve of an honest nature, afforded her many pleas, and at length she believed she had finally put it down. She had argued that, from the opinions themselves of Faber, the thing could not consistently fail to be as no thing to him. Even were she mistaken in this conclusion, it would be to wrong his large nature, his generous love, his unselfish regard, his tender pitifulness, to fail of putting her silent trust in him. Besides had she not read

in the newspapers the utterance of a certain worshipful judge on the bench, that no man had anything to do with his wife's ante-nuptial history? The contract then was certainly not retrospective. What in her remained unsatisfied after all her arguments, reasons, and appeals to common sense and consequences, she strove to strangle, and thought, hoped, she had succeeded. She willed her will, made up her mind, yielded to Paul's solicitations, and put the whole painful thing away from her.

The step taken, the marriage over, nothing could any more affect either fact. Only, unfortunately for the satisfaction and repose she had desired and expected, her love to her husband had gone on growing after they were married. True she sometimes fancied it otherwise, but while the petals of the rose were falling, its capsule was filling; and notwithstanding the opposite tendency of the deoxygenated atmosphere in which their thoughts moved, she had begun already to long after an absolute union with him. But this growth of her love, and aspiration after its perfection, although at first they covered what was gone by with a deepen-

ing mist of apparent oblivion, were all the time bringing it closer to her consciousness—out of the far into the near. And now suddenly, that shape she knew of, lying in the bottom of the darkest pool of the stagnant Past, had been stung into life by a wind of words that swept through Nestley chapel, had stretched up a hideous neck and threatening head from the deep, and was staring at her with sodden eyes: henceforth she knew that the hideous Fact had its appointed place between her and her beautiful Paul, the demon of the gulfy cleft that parted them.

The moment she spoke in reply to his greeting, her husband also felt something dividing them, but had no presentiment of its being anything of import.

"You are overtired, my love," he said, and taking her hand felt her pulse. It was feeble and frequent.

"What have they been doing to you, my darling?" he asked. "Those little demons of ponies running away again?"

"No," she answered, scarce audibly.

"Something has gone wrong with you," he

persisted. "Have you caught cold? None of the old symptoms, I hope?"

"None, Paul. There is nothing the matter," she answered, laying her head lightly, as if afraid of the liberty she took, upon his shoulder. His arm went round her waist.

"What is it, then, my wife?" he said tenderly.

"Which would you rather have, Paul—have me die, or do something wicked?"

"Juliet, this will never do!" he returned, quietly but almost severely. "You have been again giving the reins to a morbid imagination. Weakness and folly only can come of that. It is nothing better than hysteria."

"No, but tell me, dear Paul," she persisted pleadingly. "Answer my question. Do, please!"

"There is no such question to be answered," he returned. "You are not going to die, and I am yet more certain you are not going to do anything wicked.—Are you now?"

"No, Paul. Indeed I am not. But——"

"I have it!" he exclaimed. "You went to church at Nestley last night! Confound them all with their humbug! You have been letting

their infernal nonsense get a hold of you again! It has quite upset you—that, and going much too long without your dinner. What *can* be keeping it?" He left her hurriedly, and rang the bell. "You must speak to the cook, my love. She is getting out of the good habits I had so much trouble to teach her. But no—no! you shall not be troubled with *my* servants. I will speak to her myself. After dinner I will read you some of my favourite passages in Montaigne. No, you shall read to me: your French is so much better than mine."

Dinner was announced, and nothing more was said. Paul ate well, Juliet scarcely at all, but she managed to hide from him the offence. They rose together and returned to the drawing-room.

The moment Faber shut the door, Juliet turned in the middle of the room, and as he came up to her said, in a voice much unlike her own,

"Paul, if I *were* to do anything very bad, as bad as could be, would you forgive me?"

"Come, my love," expostulated Faber, speaking more gently than before, for he had had his

dinner, "surely you are not going to spoil our evening with any more such nonsense!"

"Answer me, Paul, or I shall think you do not love me," she said, and the tone of her entreaty verged upon demand. "Would you forgive me if I had done something *very* bad?"

"Of course I should," he answered, with almost irritated haste, "—that is, if I could ever bring myself to allow anything you did was wrong. Only, you would witch me out of opinion and judgment and everything else with two words from your dear lips."

"Should I, Paul?" she said; and lifting her face from his shoulder, she looked up in his from the depths of two dark fountains full of tears. Never does the soul so nearly identify itself with matter as when revealing itself through the eyes; never does matter so nearly lose itself in spiritual absorption, as when two eyes like Juliet's are possessed and glorified by the rush of the soul through their portals. Faber kissed eyes and lips and neck in a glow of delight. She was the vision of a most blessed dream, and she was his, all and altogether his! He never thought then how his own

uncreed and the prayer-book were of the same mind that Death would one day part them. There is that in every high and simple feeling that stamps it with eternity. For my own part I believe that, if life has not long before twinned any twain, Death can do nothing to divide them. The nature of each and every pure feeling, even in the man who may sin away the very memory of it, is immortal; and who knows from under what a depth of ashes the love of the saving God may yet revive it!

The next moment the doctor was summoned. When he returned, Juliet was in bed, and pretended to be asleep.

In the morning she appeared at the breakfast table so pale, so worn, so troubled, that her husband was quite anxious about her. All she would confess to was, that she had not slept well, and had a headache. Attributing her condition to a nervous attack, he gave her some medicine, took her to the drawing-room, and prescribed the new piano, which he had already found the best of all sedatives for her. She loathed the very thought of it—could no more have touched it than if the ivory keys had been

white hot steel. She watched him from the window while he mounted his horse, but the moment the last red gleam of Ruber vanished, she flung her arms above her head, and with a stifled cry threw herself on a couch, stuffed her handkerchief into her mouth, and in fierce dumb agony, tore it to shreds with hands and teeth. Presently she rose, opened the door almost furtively, and stole softly down the stair, looking this way and that, like one intent on some evil deed. At the bottom she pushed a green baize-covered door, peeped into a passage, then crept on tiptoe towards the surgery. Arrived there she darted to a spot she knew, and stretched a trembling hand towards a bottle full of a dark-coloured liquid. As instantly she drew it back, and stood listening with bated breath and terrified look. It *was* a footstep approaching the outer door of the surgery! She turned and fled from it, still noiseless, and never stopped till she was in her own room. There she shut and locked the door, fell on her knees by the bedside, and pressed her face into the coverlid. She had no thought of praying. She wanted to hide, only

to hide. Neither was it from old habit she fell upon her knees, for she had never been given to kneeling. I cannot but think, nevertheless, that there was a dumb germ of prayer at the heart of the action—that falling upon her knees, and that hiding of her face. The same moment something took place within her to which she could have given no name, which she could have represented in no words, a something which came she knew not whence, was she knew not what, and went she knew not whither, of which indeed she would never have become aware except for what followed, but which yet so wrought, that she rose from her knees saying to herself, with clenched teeth and burning eyes, "I *will* tell him."

As if she had known the moment of her death near, she began mechanically to set everything in order in the room, and as she came to herself she was saying, "Let him kill me. I wish he would. I am quite willing to die by his hand. He will be kind, and do it gently. He knows so many ways!"

It was a terrible day. She did not go out of her room again. Her mood changed a hundred

times. The resolve to confess alternated with wild mockery and laughter, but still returned. She would struggle to persuade herself that her whole condition was one of foolish exaggeration, of senseless excitement about nothing—the merest delirium of feminine fastidiousness; and the next instant would turn cold with horror at a fresh glimpse of the mere fact. What could the wretched matter be to him now—or to her? Who was the worse, or had ever been the worse but herself? And what did it amount to? What claim had any one, what claim could even a God, if such a being there were, have upon the past which had gone from her, was no more in any possible sense within her reach than if it had never been? Was it not as if it had never been? Was the woman to be hurled—to hurl herself into misery for the fault of the girl? It was all nonsense—a trifle at worst—a disagreeable trifle, no doubt, but still a trifle! Only would to God she had died rather—even although then she would never have known Paul!—Tut! she would never have thought of it again but for that horrid woman that lived over the draper's shop! All

would have been well if she had but kept from thinking about it! Nobody would have been a hair the worse then!—But, poor Paul!—to be married to such a woman as she!

If she were to be so foolish as let him know, how would it strike Paul? What would he think of it? Ought she not to be sure of that before she committed herself—before she uttered the irrevocable words? Would he call it a trifle, or would he be ready to kill her? True, he had no right, he *could* have no right to know; but how horrible that there should be any thought of right between them! still worse, anything whatever between them that he had no right to know! worst of all, that she did not belong to him so utterly that he must have a right to know *every* thing about her! She *would* tell him all! She would! she would! she had no choice! she must!—But she need not tell him now. She was not strong enough to utter the necessary words. But that made the thing very dreadful! If she could not speak the words, how bad it must really be!—Impossible to tell her Paul! That was pure absurdity.—Ah, but she *could* not! She would

be certain to faint—or fall dead at his feet. That would be well!—Yes! that would do! She would take a wine-glassful of laudanum just before she told him; then, if he was kind, she would confess the opium, and he could save her if he pleased; if he was hard, she would say nothing, and die at his feet. She had hoped to die in his arms—all that was left of eternity. But her life was his, he had saved it with his own—oh horror! that it should have been to disgrace him!—and it should not last a moment longer than it was a pleasure to him.

Worn out with thought and agony, she often fell asleep—only to start awake in fresh misery, and go over and over the same torturing round. Long before her husband appeared, she was in a burning fever. When he came, he put her at once to bed, and tended her with a solicitude as anxious as it was gentle. He soothed her to sleep, and then went and had some dinner.

On his return, finding, as he had expected, that she still slept, he sat down by her bedside, and watched. Her slumber was broken with now and then a deep sigh, now and then a moan. Alas, that we should do the things that

make for moan!—but at least I understand why we are left to do them: it is because we can. A dull fire was burning in her soul, and over it stood the caldron of her history, and it bubbled in sighs and moans.

Faber was ready enough to attribute everything human to a physical origin, but as he sat there pondering her condition, recalling her emotion and strange speech of the night before, and watching the state she was now in, an uneasiness began to gather—undefined, but other than concerned her health. Something must be wrong somewhere. He kept constantly assuring himself that at worst it could be but some mere moleheap, of which her lovelily sensitive organization, under the influence of a foolish preachment, made a mountain. Still, it was a huge disorder to come from a trifle! At the same time who knew better than he upon what a merest trifle nervous excitement will fix the attention! or how to the mental eye such a speck will grow and grow until it absorb the universe! Only a certain other disquieting thought, having come once, would keep returning—that, thoroughly as he believed himself

acquainted with her mind, he had very little knowledge of her history. He did not know a single friend of hers, had never met a person who knew anything of her family, or had even an acquaintance with her earlier than his own. The thing he most dreaded was, that the shadow of some old affection had returned upon her soul, and that, in her excessive delicacy, she heaped blame upon herself that she had not absolutely forgotten it. He flung from him in scorn every slightest suggestion of blame. *His* Juliet! his glorious Juliet! Bah!—But he must get her to say what the matter was—for her own sake; he must help her to reveal her trouble, whatever it might be—else how was he to do his best to remove it! She should find he knew how to be generous!

Thus thinking, he sat patient by her side, watching until the sun of her consciousness should rise and scatter the clouds of sleep. Hour after hour he sat, and still she slept, outwearied with the rack of emotion. Morning had begun to peep gray through the window-curtains, when she woke with a cry.

She had been dreaming. In the little chapel in

Nestley Park, she sat listening to the curate's denouncement of hypocrisy, when suddenly the scene changed: the pulpit had grown to a mighty cloud, upon which stood an archangel with a trumpet in his hand. He cried that the hour of the great doom had come for all who bore within them the knowledge of any evil thing neither bemoaned before God nor confessed to man. Then he lifted the great silver trumpet with a gleam to his lips, and every fibre of her flesh quivered in expectation of the tearing blast that was to follow; when instead, soft as a breath of spring from a bank of primroses, came the words, uttered in the gentlest of sorrowful voices, and the voice seemed that of her unbelieving Paul: "I will arise and go to my Father."

It was no wonder, therefore, that she woke with a cry. It was one of indescribable emotion. When she saw his face bending over her in anxious love, she threw her arms round his neck, burst into a storm of weeping, and sobbed,

"Oh, Paul! husband! forgive me. I have sinned against you terribly—the worst sin a

woman can commit. Oh, Paul! Paul! make me clean, or I am lost."

"Juliet, you are raving," he said, bewildered, a little angry, and at her condition not a little alarmed. For the confession, it was preposterous: they had not been many weeks married! "Calm yourself, or you will give me a lunatic for a wife!" he said. Then changing his tone, for his heart rebuked him, when he saw the ashy despair that spread over her face and eyes, "Be still, my precious," he went on. "All is well. You have been dreaming, and are not yet quite awake. It is the morphia you had last night! Don't look so frightened. It is only your husband. No one else is near you."

With the tenderest smile he sought to reassure her, and would have gently released himself from the agonized clasp of her arms about his neck, that he might get her something. But she tightened her hold.

"Don't leave me, Paul," she cried. "I was dreaming, but I am wide awake now, and know only too well what I have done."

"Dreams are nothing. The will is not in them," he said.

But the thought of his sweet wife even dreaming a thing to be repented of in such dismay, tore his heart. For he was one of the many—not all of the purest—who cherish an ideal of woman which, although indeed poverty-stricken and crude, is to their minds of snowy favour, to their judgment of loftiest excellence. I trust in God that many a woman, despite the mud of doleful circumstance, yea, even the defilement that comes first from within, has risen to a radiance of essential innocence ineffably beyond that whose form stood white in Faber's imagination. For I see and understand a little how God, giving righteousness, makes pure of sin, and that verily—by no theological quibble of imputation, by no play with words, by no shutting of the eyes, no oblivion, wilful or irresistible, but by very fact of cleansing, so that the consciousness of the sinner becomes glistering as the raiment of the Lord on the mount of his transfiguration. I do not expect the Pharisee who calls the sinner evil names, and drags her up to judgment, to comprehend this; but, woman, cry to thy Father in heaven, for he can make thee white, even to the contentment of

that womanhood which thou hast thyself outraged.

Faber unconsciously prided himself on the severity of his requirements of woman, and saw his own image reflected in the polish of his ideal; and now a fear whose presence he would not acknowledge began to gnaw at his heart, a vague suggestion's horrid image, to which he would yield no space to flit about his brain.

"Would to God it were a dream, Paul!" answered the stricken wife.

"You foolish child!" returned the nigh trembling husband, "how can you expect me to believe, married but yesterday, you have already got tired of me!"

"Tired of you, Paul! I should desire no other eternal paradise than to lie thus under your eyes for ever."

"Then for my sake, my darling wife, send away this extravagance, this folly, this absurd fancy that has got such a hold of you. It will turn to something serious if you do not resist it. There can be no truth in it, and I am certain that one with any strength of character can do much at least to prevent the deeper rooting of

a fixed idea." But as he spoke thus to her, in his own soul he was as one fighting the demons off with a fan. "Tell me what the mighty matter is," he went on, "that I may assure you it is nothing—that I may swear to you I love you the more for the worst weakness you have to confess."

"Ah, my love!" returned Juliet, "how like you are now to the Paul I have dreamed of so often! But you will not be able to forgive me. I have read somewhere that men never forgive—that their honour is before their wives with them. Paul! if you should not be able to forgive me, you must help me to die, and not be cruel to me."

"Juliet, I will not listen to any more such foolish words. Either tell me plainly what you mean, that I may convince you what a goose you are, or be quiet and go to sleep again."

"*Can* it be that after all it does not signify so much?" she said aloud, but only to herself, meditating in the light of a little glow-worm of hope. "Oh if it could be so! And what is it really so much! I have not murdered anybody! —I *will* tell you, Paul!"

She drew his head closer down, laid her lips to his ear, gave a great gasp, and whispered two or three words.

He started up, sundering at once the bonds of her clasped hands, cast one brief stare at her, turned, walked with a great quick stride to his dressing-room, entered, and closed the door.

As if with one rush of a fell wind, they were ages, deserts, empty star-spaces apart! She was outside the universe, in the cold frenzy of infinite loneliness. The wolves of despair were howling in her. But Paul was in the next room! There was only the door between them! She sprung from her bed and ran to a closet. The next moment she appeared in her husband's dressing-room.

Paul sat sunk together in his chair, his head hanging forward, his teeth set, his whole shape, in limb and feature, carrying the show of profound, of irrecoverable injury. He started to his feet when she entered. She did not once lift her eyes to his face, but sunk on her knees before him, hurriedly slipped her night-gown from her shoulders to her waist, and over her

head, bent towards the floor, held up to him a riding-whip.

They were baleful stars that looked down on that naked world beneath them.

To me scarce anything is so utterly pathetic as the back. That of an animal even is full of sad suggestion. But the human back!—It is the other, the dark side of the human moon; the blind side of the being, defenceless, and exposed to everything; the ignorant side, turned towards the abyss of its unknown origin; the unfeatured side, eyeless and dumb and helpless—the enduring animal of the marvellous commonwealth, to be given to the smiter, and to bend beneath the burden—lovely in its patience and the tender forms of its strength.

An evil word, resented by the lowest of our sisters, rushed to the man's lips, but died there in a strangled murmur.

"Paul!" said Juliet, in a voice from whose tone it seemed as if her soul had sunk away, and was crying out of a hollow place of the earth, "take it—take it. Strike me."

He made no reply—stood utterly motionless, his teeth clenched so hard that he could not

have spoken without grinding them. She waited as motionless, her face bowed to the floor, the whip held up over her head.

"Paul!" she said again, "you saved my life once: save my soul now. Whip me, and take me again."

He answered with only a strange unnatural laugh through his teeth.

"Whip me, and let me die then," she said.

He spoke no word. She spoke again. Despair gave her both insight and utterance—despair and great love, and the truth of God that underlies even despair.

"You pressed me to marry you," she said: "what was I to do? How could I tell you? And I loved you so! I persuaded myself I was safe with you—you were so generous. You would protect me from everything, even my own past. In your name I sent it away, and would not think of it again. I said to myself you would not wish me to tell you the evil that had befallen me. I persuaded myself you loved me enough even for that. I held my peace trusting you. Oh my husband! my Paul! my heart is crushed. The dreadful thing has come

back. I thought it was gone from me, and now it will not leave me any more. I am a horror to myself. There is no one to punish and forgive me but you. Forgive me, husband. You are the God to whom I pray. If you pardon me, I shall be content even with myself. I shall seek no other pardon; your favour is all I care for. If you take me for clean, I *am* clean to all the world. You can make me clean—you only. Do it, Paul; do it, husband. Make me clean that I may look women in the face. Do, Paul, take the whip and strike me. I long for my deserts at your hand. Do comfort me. I am waiting the sting of it, Paul, to know that you have forgiven me. If I should cry out, it will be for gladness.—Oh, my husband"—here her voice rose to an agony of entreaty—"I was but a girl—hardly more than a child in knowledge—I did not know what I was doing. He was much older than I was, and I trusted him! —O my God! I hardly know what I knew and what I did not know: it was only when it was too late that I woke and understood. I hate myself. I scorn myself. But am I to be wretched for ever because of that one fault,

Paul?—to lose you, Paul? Will you not be my saviour and forgive me my sin? Oh, do not drive me mad. I am only clinging to my reason. Whip me, and I shall be well. Take me again, Paul. I will not, if you like, even fancy myself your wife any more. I will be your slave. You shall do with me whatever you will. I will obey you to the very letter. Oh beat me and let me go."

She sunk prone on the floor, and clasped and kissed his feet.

He took the whip from her hand.

Of course a man cannot strike a woman! He may tread her in the mire; he may clasp her and then scorn her; he may kiss her close, and then dash her from him into a dungheap, but he must not strike her—that would be unmanly! Oh, grace itself is the rage of the pitiful Othello to the forbearance of many a self-contained, cold-blooded, self-careful slave, that thinks himself a gentleman! Had not Faber been even then full of his own precious self, had he yielded to her prayer or to his own wrath, how many hours of agony would have been saved them both!—"What! would you have

had him really strike her?" I would have had him do *anything* rather than choose himself and reject his wife: make of it what you will. Had he struck once, had he seen the purple streak rise in the snow, that instant his pride-frozen heart would have melted into a torrent of grief; he would have flung himself on the floor beside her, and in an agony of pity over her and horror at his own sacrilege, would have clasped her to his bosom, and baptized her in the tears of remorse and repentance; from that moment they would have been married indeed.

When she felt him take the whip, the poor lady's heart gave a great heave of hope; then her flesh quivered with fear. She closed her teeth hard, to welcome the blow without a cry. Would he give her many stripes? Then the last should be welcome as the first. Would it spoil her skin? What matter, if it was his own hand that did it!

A brief delay—long to her! then the hiss, as it seemed, of the coming blow! But instead of the pang she awaited, the sharp ring of breaking glass followed: he had thrown the whip through the window into the garden. The

same moment he dragged his feet rudely from her embrace, and left the room. The devil and the gentleman had conquered. He had spared her, not in love, but in scorn. She gave one great cry of utter loss, and lay senseless.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BOTTOMLESS POOL.

SHE came to herself in the gray dawn. She was cold as ice—cold to the very heart, but she did not feel the cold: there was nothing in her to compare it against; her very being was frozen. The man who had given her life had thrown her from him. He cared less for her than for the tortured dog. She was an outcast, defiled and miserable. Alas! alas! this was what came of speaking the truth—of making confession! The cruel scripture had wrought its own fulfilment, made a mock of her, and ruined her husband's peace. She knew poor Paul would never be himself again! She had carried the snake so long harmless in her bosom only to let it at last creep from her lips into her husband's ear, sting the vital core of

her universe, and blast it for ever! How foolish she had been!—What was left her to do? What would her husband have her do? Oh misery! he cared no more what she did or did not do. She was alone—utterly alone! But she need not live.

Dimly, vaguely, the vapour of such thoughts as these passed through her despairing soul, as she lifted herself from the floor and tottered back to her room. Yet even then, in the very midst of her freezing misery, there was, although she had not yet begun to recognize it, a nascent comfort in that she had spoken and confessed. She would not really have taken back her confession. And although the torture was greater, yet was it more endurable than that she had been suffering before. She had told him who had a right to know.—But, alas! what a deception was that dream of the trumpet and the voice! A poor trick to entrap a helpless sinner!

Slowly, with numbed fingers and trembling hands, she dressed herself: that bed she would lie in no more, for she had wronged her husband. Whether before or after he was her hus-

band, mattered nothing. To have ever called him husband was the wrong. She had seemed that she was not, else he would never have loved or sought her; she had outraged his dignity, defiled him; he had cast her off, and she could not, would not blame him. Happily for her endurance of her misery, she did not turn upon her idol and cast him from his pedestal; she did not fix her gaze upon his failure instead of her own; she did not espy the contemptible in his conduct, and revolt from her allegiance.

But was such a man then altogether the ideal of a woman's soul? Was he a fit champion of humanity who would aid only within the limits of his pride? who, when a despairing creature cried in soul-agony for help, thought first and only of his own honour? The notion men call their honour is the shadow of righteousness, the shape that is where the light is not, the devil that dresses as nearly in angel-fashion as he can, but is none the less for that a sneak and a coward.

She put on her cloak and bonnet; the house was his, not hers. He and she had never been

one: she must go and meet her fate. There was one power, at least, the key to the great door of liberty, which the weakest as well as the strongest possessed: she could die. Ah, how welcome would Death be now! Did he ever know or heed the right time to come, without being sent for—without being compelled? In the meantime her only anxiety was to get out of the house: away from Paul she would understand more precisely what she had to do. With the feeling of his angry presence, she could not think. Yet how she loved him—strong in his virtue and indignation! She had not yet begun to pity herself, or to allow to her heart that he was hard upon her.

She was leaving the room when a glitter on her hand caught her eye: the old diamond disc, which he had bought of her in her trouble, and restored to her on her wedding day, was answering the herald of the sunrise. She drew it off: he must have it again. With it she drew off also her wedding ring. Together she laid them on the dressing-table, turned again, and with noiseless foot and desert heart went through the house, opened the door, and stole

into the street. A thin mist was waiting for her. A lean cat, gray as the mist, stood on the steps of the door opposite. No other living thing was to be seen. The air was chill. The autumn rains were at hand. But her heart was the only desolation.

Already she knew where she was going. In the street she turned to the left.

Shortly before, she had gone with Dorothy, for the first time, to see the Old House, and there had had rather a narrow escape. Walking down the garden they came to the pond or small lake, so well known to the children of Glaston as bottomless. Two stone steps led from the end of the principal walk down to the water, which was, at the time, nearly level with the top of the second. On the upper step Juliet was standing, not without fear, gazing into the gulf, which was yet far deeper than she imagined, when, without the smallest pre-indication, the lower step suddenly sank. Juliet sprung back to the walk, but turned instantly to look again. She saw the stone sinking, and her eyes opened wider and wider, as it swelled and thinned to a great, dull, wavering mass,

grew dimmer and dimmer, then melted away and vanished utterly. With "stricken look," and fright-filled eyes, she turned to Dorothy, who was a little behind her, and said,

"How will you be able to sleep at night? I should be always fancying myself sliding down into it through the darkness."

To this place of terror she was now on the road. When consciousness returned to her as she lay on the floor of her husband's dressing-room, it brought with it first the awful pool and the sinking stone. She seemed to stand watching it sink, lazily settling with a swing this way and a sway that, into the bosom of the earth, down and down, and still down. Nor did the vision leave her as she came more to herself. Even when her mental eyes were at length quite open to the far more frightful verities of her condition, half of her consciousness was still watching the ever sinking stone; until at last she seemed to understand that it was showing her a door out of her misery, one easy to open.

She went the same way into the park that Dorothy had then taken her—through a little door of privilege which she had shown her how

to open, and not by the lodge. The light was growing fast, but the sun was not yet up. With feeble steps but feverish haste she hurried over the grass. Her feet were wet through her thin shoes. Her dress was fringed with dew. But there was no need for taking care of herself now; she felt herself already beyond the reach of sickness. The still pond would soon wash off the dew.

Suddenly, with a tremor of waking hope, came the thought, that, when she was gone from his sight, the heart of her husband would perhaps turn again towards her a little. For would he not then be avenged? would not his justice be satisfied? She had been well drilled in the theological lie, that punishment is the satisfaction of justice.

"Oh, now I thank you, Paul!" she said, as she hastened along. "You taught me the darkness, and made me brave to seek its refuge. Think of me sometimes, Paul. I will come back to you if I can—but no, there is no coming back, no greeting more, no shadows even to mingle their loves, for in a dream there is but one that dreams. I shall be the one that does

not dream. There is nothing where I am going —not even the darkness—nothing but nothing. Ah, would I were in it now! Let me make haste. All will be one, for all will be none when I am there. Make you haste too, and come into the darkness, Paul. It is soothing and soft and cool. It will wash away the sin of the girl and leave you a — — nothing."

While she was thus hurrying towards the awful pool, her husband sat in his study, sunk in a cold fury of conscious disgrace—not because of his cruelty, not because he had cast a woman into hell—but because his honour, his self-satisfaction in his own fate, was thrown to the worms. Did he fail thus in consequence of having rejected the common belief? No; something far above the *common* belief it must be, that would have enabled him to act otherwise. But had he *known* the man of the gospel, he could not have left her. He would have taken her to his sorrowful bosom, wept with her, forgotten himself in pitiful grief over the spot upon her whiteness; he would have washed her clean with love and husband-power. He would have welcomed his shame as his hold of

her burden, whereby to lift it, with all its misery and loss, from her heart for ever. Had Faber done so as he was, he would have come close up to the gate of the kingdom of heaven, for he would have been like-minded with him who sought not his own. His honour, forsooth! Pride is a mighty honour! His pride was great indeed, but it was not grand! Nothing reflected, nothing whose object is self, has in it the poorest element of grandeur. Our selves are ours that we may lay them on the altar of love. Lying there, bound and bleeding and burning if need be, they are grand indeed—for they are in their noble place, and rejoicing in their fate. But this man was miserable, because, the possessor of a priceless jewel, he had found it was not such as would pass for flawless in the judgment of men—judges themselves unjust, whose very hearts were full of bribes. He sat there an injured husband, a wronged, woman-cheated, mocked man—he in whose eyes even a smutch on her face would have lowered a woman—who would not have listened to an angel with a broken wing-feather!

Let me not be supposed to make little of

Juliet's loss! What that amounted to, let Juliet herself feel!—let any woman say, who loves a man, and would be what that man thinks her! But I read, and think I understand, the words of the perfect Purity: "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more."

CHAPTER XIV.

A HEART.

IF people were both observant and memorious, they would cease, I fancy, to be astonished at coincidences. Rightly regarded, the universe is but one coincidence—only where will has to be developed, there is need for human play, and room for that must be provided in its spaces. The works of God being from the beginning, and all his beginnings invisible either from greatness or smallness or nearness or remoteness, numberless coincidences may pass in every man's history, before he becomes capable of knowing either the need or the good of them, or even of noting them.

The same morning there was another awake and up early. When Juliet was about half-way across the park, hurrying to the water, Dorothy

was opening the door of the empty house, seeking solitude that she might find the one dweller therein. She went straight to one of the upper rooms looking out upon the garden, and kneeling, prayed to her Unknown God. As she knelt, the first rays of the sunrise visited her face. That face was in itself such an embodied prayer, that had any one seen it, he might, when the beams fell upon it, have imagined he saw prayer and answer meet. It was another sunrise Dorothy was looking for, but she started and smiled when the warm rays touched her: they too came from the home of answers. As the daisy mimics the sun, so is the central fire of our system but a flower that blossoms in the eternal effulgence of the unapproachable light.

The God to whom we pray is nearer to us than the very prayer itself ere it leaves the heart; hence his answers may well come to us through the channel of our own thoughts. But the world too being itself one of his thoughts, he may also well make the least likely of his creatures an angel of his will to us. Even the blind, if God be with him, that is, if he knows he is blind and does not think he

sees, may become a leader of the blind up to the narrow gate. It is the blind who says *I see*, that leads his fellow into the ditch.

The window near which Dorothy kneeled, and towards which in the instinct for light she had turned her face, looked straight down the garden, at the foot of which the greater part of the circumference of the pond was visible. But Dorothy, busy with her prayers, or rather with a weight of hunger and thirst, from which, like a burst of lightning skyward from the overcharged earth, a prayer would now and then break and rush heavenward, saw nothing of the outer world: between her and a sister soul in mortal agony hung the curtains of her eyelids. But there were no shutters to her ears, and in at their portals all of a sudden darted a great and bitter cry, as from a heart in the gripe of a fierce terror. She had been so absorbed, and it so startled and shook her, that she never could feel certain whether the cry she had heard was of this world or not. Half-asleep one hears such a cry, and cannot tell whether it entered his consciousness by the ears or through some hidden channel of the soul.

Assured that waking ears heard nothing, he remains, it may be, in equal doubt, whether it came from the other side of life or was the mere cry of a dream. Before Dorothy was aware of a movement of her will, she was on her feet, and staring from the window. Something was lying on the grass beyond the garden wall, close to the pond: it looked like a woman. She darted from the house, out of the garden, and down the other side of the wall. When she came nearer, she saw it was indeed a woman, evidently insensible. She was bare-headed. Her bonnet was floating on the pond; the wind had blown it almost to the middle of it. Her face was turned towards the water. One hand was in it. The bank overhung the pond, and with a single movement more she would probably have been beyond help from Dorothy. She caught her by the arm, and dragged her from the brink, before ever she looked in her face. Then to her amazement she saw it was Juliet. She opened her eyes, and it was as if a lost soul looked out of them upon Dorothy—a being to whom the world was nothing, so occupied was it with some torment which alone

measured its existence—far away, although it hung attached to the world by a single hook of brain and nerve.

"Juliet, my darling!" said Dorothy, her voice trembling with the love which only souls that know trouble can feel for the troubled, "come with me. I will take care of you."

At the sound of her voice, Juliet shuddered. Then a better light came into her eyes, and feebly she endeavoured to get up. With Dorothy's help she succeeded, but stood as if ready to sink again to the earth. She drew her cloak about her, turned and stared at the water, turned again and stared at Dorothy, at last threw herself into her arms, and sobbed and wailed. For a few moments Dorothy held her in a close embrace. Then she sought to lead her to the house, and Juliet yielded at once. She took her into one of the lower rooms, and got her some water—it was all she could get for her, and made her sit down on the window-seat. It seemed a measureless time before she made the least attempt to speak; and again and again when she began to try, she failed. She opened her mouth, but no sounds would come. At

length, interrupted with choking gasps, low cries of despair, and long intervals of sobbing, she said something like this:

"I was going to drown myself. When I came in sight of the water, I fell down in a half kind of faint. All the time I lay, I felt as if some one was dragging me nearer and nearer to the pool. Then something came and drew me back—and it was you, Dorothy. But you ought to have left me. I am a wretch. There is no room for me in this world any more." She stopped a moment, then fixing wide eyes on Dorothy's, said, "Oh Dorothy, dear! there are awful things in the world! as awful as any you ever read in a book!"

"I know that, dear. But oh! I am sorry if any of them have come your way. Tell me what is the matter. I *will* help you if I can."

"I dare not; I dare not! I should go raving mad if I said a word about it."

"Then don't tell me, my dear. Come with me upstairs; there is a warmer room there—full of sunshine; you are nearly dead with cold. I came here this morning, Juliet, to be alone and pray to God; and see what he has sent me!

You dear! Come upstairs. Why, you are quite wet! you'll get your death of cold!"

"Then it would be all right. I would rather not kill myself if I could die without. But it must be somehow."

"We'll talk about that afterwards. Come now."

With Dorothy's arm round her waist, Juliet climbed trembling to the warmer room. On a rickety wooden chair, Dorothy made her sit in the sunshine, while she went and gathered chips and shavings and bits of wood left by the workmen. With these she soon kindled a fire in the rusty grate. Then she took off Juliet's shoes and stockings, and put her own upon her. She made no resistance, only her eyes followed Dorothy's bare feet going to and fro, as if she felt something was wrong, and had not strength to inquire into it.

But Dorothy's heart rebuked her for its own lightness. It had not been so light for many a day. It seemed as if God was letting her know that he was there. She spread her cloak on a sunny spot of the floor, made Juliet lie down upon it, put a bundle of shavings under her

head, covered her with her own cloak, which she had dried at the fire, and was leaving the room.

"Where are you going, Dorothy?" cried Juliet, seeming all at once to wake up.

"I am going to fetch your husband, dear," answered Dorothy.

She gave a great cry, rose to her knees, and clasped Dorothy round hers.

"No, no, no!" she screamed. "You shall not. If you do, I swear I will run straight to the pond."

Notwithstanding the wildness of her voice and look, there was an evident determination in both.

"I will do nothing you don't like, dear," said Dorothy. "I thought that was the best thing I could do for you."

"No! no! no! Anything but that!"

"Then of course I won't. But I must go and get you something to eat."

"I could not swallow a mouthful; it would choke me. And where would be the good ot it, when life is over?"

"Don't talk like that, dear. Life can't be over till it is taken from us."

"Ah, you would see it just as I do, if you knew all!"

"Tell me all, then."

"Where is the use, when there is no help?"

"No help!" echoed Dorothy.—The words she had so often uttered in her own heart, coming from the lips of another carried in them an incredible contradiction.—Could God make or the world breed the irreparable?—"Juliet," she went on, after a little pause, "I have often said the same myself, but——"

"You!" interrupted Juliet; "you who always professed to believe!"

Dorothy's ear could not distinguish whether the tone was of indignation or of bitterness.

"You never heard me, Juliet," she answered, "profess anything. If my surroundings did so for me, I could not help that. I never dared say I believed anything. But I hope—and, perhaps," she went on with a smile, "seeing Hope is own sister to Faith, she may bring me to know her too some day. Paul says——"

Dorothy had been brought up a dissenter, and never said *St.* this one or that, any more than the Christians of the New Testament.

At the sound of the name, Juliet burst into tears, the first she shed, for the word *Paul*, like the head of the javelin torn from the wound, brought the whole fountain after it. She cast herself down again, and lay and wept. Dorothy knelt beside her, and laid a hand on her shoulder. It was the only way she could reach her at all.

"You see," she said at last, for the weeping went on and on, "there is nothing will do you any good but your husband."

"No, no; he has cast me from him for ever!" she cried, in a strange wail that rose to a shriek.

"The wretch!" exclaimed Dorothy, clenching a fist whose little bones looked fierce through the whitened skin.

"No," returned Juliet, suddenly calmed, in a voice almost severe; "it is I who am the wretch, to give you a moment in which to blame him.—He has done nothing but what is right."

"I don't believe it."

"I deserved it."

"I am sure you did not. I would believe a

thousand things against him before I would believe one against you, my poor white queen!" cried Dorothy, kissing her hand.

She snatched it away, and covered her face with both hands.

"I should only need to tell you one thing to convince you," she sobbed from behind them.

"Then tell it me, that I may not be unjust to him."

"I cannot."

"I won't take your word against yourself," returned Dorothy determinedly. "You will have to tell me, or leave me to think the worst of him." She was moved by no vulgar curiosity: how is one to help without knowing? "Tell me, my dear," she went on after a little; "tell me all about it, and in the name of the God in whom I hope to believe, I promise to give myself to your service."

Thus adjured, Juliet found herself compelled. But with what heart-tearing groans and sobs, with what intervals of dumbness, in which the truth seemed unutterable for despair and shame, followed by what hurryings of wild confession, as if she would cast it from her, the sad tale

found its way into Dorothy's aching heart, I will not attempt to describe. It is enough that at last it was told, and that it had entered at the wide-open eternal doors of sympathy. If Juliet had lost a husband, she had gained a friend, and that was something—indeed no little thing—for in her kind the friend was more complete than the husband. She was truer, more entire—in friendship nearly perfect. When a final burst of tears had ended the story of loss and despair, a silence fell.

"Oh, those men! those men!" said Dorothy, in a low voice of bitterness, as if she knew them and their ways well, though never had kiss of man save her father lighted on her cheek. "—My poor darling!" she said after another pause, "—and he cast you from him!—I suppose a woman's heart," she went on after a third pause, "can never make up for the loss of a man's, but here is mine for you to go into the very middle of, and lie down there."

Juliet had, as she told her story, risen to her knees. Dorothy was on hers too, and as she spoke she opened wide her arms, and clasped the despised wife to her bosom. None but the

arms of her husband, Juliet believed, could make her alive with forgiveness, yet she felt a strange comfort in that embrace. It wrought upon her as if she had heard a far-off whisper of the words: *Thy sins be forgiven thee.* And no wonder: there was the bosom of one of the Lord's clean ones for her to rest upon! It was her first lesson in the mighty truth that sin of all things is mortal, and purity alone can live for evermore.

CHAPTER XV.

TWO MORE MINDS.

NOTHING makes a man strong like a call upon him for help—a fact which points at a unity more delicate and close and profound than heart has yet perceived. It is but "a modern instance" how a mother, if she be but a hen, becomes bold as a tigress for her perilled offspring. A stranger will fight for the stranger who puts his trust in him. The most foolish of men will search his musty brain to find wise saws for his boy. An anxious man, going to his friend to borrow, may return having lent him instead. The man who has found nothing yet in the world save food for the hard, sharp, clear intellect, will yet cast an eye around the universe to see if perchance there may not be a God somewhere for the hungering heart of his

friend. The poor, but lovely, the doubting, yet living faith of Dorothy arose, stretched out its crippled wings, and began to arrange and straighten their disordered feathers. It is a fair sight, any creature, be it but a fly, dressing its wings! Dorothy's were feeble, ruffled, their pen-feathers bent and a little crushed; but Juliet's were full of mud, paralyzed with disuse, and grievously singed in the smouldering fire of her secret. A butterfly that has burnt its wings is not very unlike a caterpillar again.

"Look here, Juliet," said Dorothy: "there must be some way out of it, or there is no saving God in the universe.—Now don't begin to say there isn't, because, you see, it is your only chance. It would be a pity to make a fool of yourself by being over-wise, to lose everything by taking it for granted there is no God. If after all there should be one, it would be the saddest thing to perish for want of him. I won't say I am as miserable as you, for I haven't a husband to trample on my heart; but I am miserable enough, and want dreadfully to be saved. I don't call this a life worth living. Nothing is right, nothing goes well—there is

no harmony in me. I don't call it life at all. I want music and light in me. I want a God to save me out of this wretchedness. I want health."

"I thought you were never ill, Dorothy," murmured Juliet listlessly.

"Is it possible you do not know what I mean?" returned Dorothy. "Do you never feel wretched and sick in your very soul?—disgusted with yourself, and longing to be lifted up out of yourself into a region of higher conditions altogether?"

That kind of thing Juliet had been learning to attribute to the state of her health—had partly learned: it is hard to learn anything false *thoroughly*, for it *cannot* so be learned. It is true that it is often, perhaps it is generally, in troubled health, that such thoughts come first; but in nature there are facts of colour that the cloudy day reveals. So sure am I that many things which illness has led me to see are true, that I would endlessly rather never be well than lose sight of them. "So would any madman say of his fixed idea." I will keep my madness, then, for therein most do I desire

the noble; and to desire what I desire, if it be but to desire, is better than to have all you offer us in the name of truth. Through such desire and the hope of its attainment, all greatest things have been wrought in the earth: I too have my unbelief as well as you—I cannot believe that a lie on the belief of which has depended our highest development. You may say you have a higher to bring in. But that higher you have become capable of by the precedent lie. Yet you vaunt truth! You would sink us low indeed, making out falsehood our best nourishment—at some period of our history at least. If, however, what I call true and high, you call false and low—my assertion that you have never seen that of which I so speak will not help—then is there nothing left us but to part, each go his own road, and wait the end—which according to my expectation will show the truth, according to yours, being nothing, will show nothing.

"I cannot help thinking, if we could only get up there," Dorothy went on, "—I mean into a life of which I can at least dream—if I could but get my head and heart into the kingdom of

heaven, I should find that everything else would come right. I believe it is God himself I want —nothing will do but himself in me. Mr. Wingfold says that we find things all wrong about us, that they keep going against our will and our liking, just to drive things right inside us, or at least to drive us where we can get them put right; and that, as soon as their work is done, the waves will lie down at our feet, or if not, we shall at least walk over their crests."

"It sounds very nice, and would comfort anybody that wasn't in trouble," said Juliet; "but you wouldn't care one bit for it all, any more than I do, if you had pain and love like mine pulling at your heart."

"I have seen a mother make sad faces enough over the baby at her breast," said Dorothy. "Love and pain seem so strangely one in this world, the wonder is how they will ever get parted. What God must feel like, with this world hanging on to him with all its pains and cries——"

"It's his own fault," said Juliet bitterly. "Why did he make us—or why did he not

make us good? I'm sure I don't know where was the use of making me."

"Perhaps not much yet," replied Dorothy, "but then he hasn't made you, he hasn't done with you yet. He is making you now, and you don't like it."

"No, I don't—if you call this making. Why does he do it? He could have avoided all the trouble by leaving us alone."

"I put something like the same questions once to Mr. Wingfold," said Dorothy; "and he told me it was impossible to show any one the truths of the kingdom of heaven: he must learn them for himself. 'I can do little more,' he said, 'than give you my testimony that it seems to me all right. If God has not made you good, he has made you with the feeling that you ought to be good, and at least a half-conviction that to him you have to go for help to become good. When you are good, then you will know why he did not make you good at first, and will be perfectly satisfied with the reason, because you will find it good and just and right—so good that it was altogether beyond the understanding of one who was not good. I

don't think,' he said, 'you will ever get a thoroughly satisfactory answer to any question till you go to himself for it—and then it may take years to make you fit to receive, that is to understand, the answer.'—O Juliet! sometimes I have felt in my heart as if—I am afraid to say it, even to you,——"

"*I* shan't be shocked at anything; I am long past that," sighed Juliet.

"It is not of you I am afraid," said Dorothy. "It is a kind of awe of the universe I feel. But God is the universe; his is the only ear that will hear me; and he knows my thought already. Juliet, I feel sometimes as if I *must* be good for God's sake; as if I was sorry for him, because he has such a troublesome nursery of children, that will not or cannot understand him, and will not do what he tells them, and he all the time doing the very best for them he can."

"It may be all very true, or all great nonsense, Dorothy, dear; I don't care a bit about it. All I care for is—I don't know what I care for—I don't care for anything any more—there is nothing left to care for. I love my husband

with a heart like to break—oh how I wish it would! He hates and despises me, and I dare not wish that he wouldn't. If he were to forgive me quite, I should yet feel that he ought to despise me, and that would be all the same as if he did, and there is no help. Oh, how horrid I look to him! I *can't* bear it. I fancied it was all gone; but there it is, and there it must be for ever. I don't care about a God. If there were a God, what would he be to me without my Paul?"

"I think, Juliet, you will yet come to say, 'What would my Paul be to me without my God!' I suspect we have no more idea than that lonely fly on the window there, what it would be *to have a God.*"

"I don't care. I would rather go to hell with my Paul, than go to heaven without him," moaned Juliet.

"But what if God should be the only where to find your Paul?" said Dorothy. "What if the gulf that parts you is just the gulf of a God not believed in—a universe which neither of you can cross to meet the other, just because you do not believe it is there at all?"

Juliet made no answer—Dorothy could not tell whether from feeling or from indifference. The fact was, the words conveyed no more meaning to Juliet than they will to some of my readers. Why do I write them then? Because there are some who will understand them at once, and others who will grow to understand them. Dorothy was astonished to find herself saying them. The demands of her new office of comforter gave shape to many half-formed thoughts, substance to many shadowy perceptions, something like music to not a few dim feelings moving within her; but what she said hardly seemed her own at all.

Had it not been for Wingfold's help, Dorothy might not have learned these things in this world; but had it not been for Juliet, they would have taken years more to blossom in her being, and so become her own. Her faint hope seemed now to break forth suddenly into power. Whether or not she was saying such things as were within the scope of Juliet's apprehension, was a matter of comparatively little moment. As she lay there in misery, rocking herself from side to side on the floor, she would

have taken hold of nothing. But Love is the first comforter, and where love and truth speak, the love will be felt where the truth is never perceived. Love indeed is the highest in all truth; and the pressure of a hand, a kiss, the caress of a child, will do more to save sometimes, than the wisest argument, even rightly understood. Love alone is wisdom, love alone is power; and where love seems to fail, it is where self has stepped between and dulled the potency of its rays.

Dorothy thought of another line of expostulation.

"Juliet," she said, "suppose you were to drown yourself, and your husband were to repent?"

"That is the only hope left me. You see yourself I have no choice."

"You have no pity, it seems; for what then would become of him? What if he should come to himself in bitter sorrow, in wild longing for your forgiveness, but you had taken your forgiveness with you, where he had no hope of ever finding it? Do you want to punish him? to make him as miserable as your-

self? to add immeasurably to the wrong you have done him, by going where no word, no message, no letter can pass, no cry can cross? No, Juliet—death can set nothing right. But if there be a God, then nothing can go wrong but he can set it right, and set it right better than it was before."

"He could not make it better than it was."

"What!—is that your ideal of love—a love that fails in the first trial? If he could not better that, then indeed he were no God worth the name."

"Why then did he make us such—make such a world as is always going wrong?"

"Mr. Wingfold says it is always going righter the same time it is going wrong. I grant he would have had no right to make a world that might go farther wrong than he could set right at his own cost. But if at his own cost he turn its ills into goods? its ugliness into favour? Ah, if it should be so, Juliet! It *may* be so. I do not know. I have not found him yet. Help me to find him. Let us seek him together. If you find him, you cannot lose your husband. If Love is lord of the

world, love must yet be lord in his heart. It will wake, if not sooner, yet when the bitterness has worn itself out, as Mr. Wingfold says all evil must, because its heart is death and not life."

"I don't care a straw for life. If I could but find my husband, I would gladly die for ever in his arms. It is not true that the soul longs for immortality. I don't. I long only for love—for forgiveness—for my husband."

"But would you die so long as there was the poorest chance of regaining your place in his heart?"

"No. Give me the feeblest chance of that, and I will live. I could live for ever on the mere hope of it."

"I can't give you any, but I have hope of it in my own heart."

Juliet rose on her elbow.

"But I am disgraced!" she said, almost indignantly. "It would be disgrace to him to take me again! I remember one of the officers' wives——. No, no! he hates and despises me. Besides I could never look one of his friends in the face again. Everybody will say I ran away

with some one—or that he sent me away because I was wicked. You all had a prejudice against me from the very first."

"Yes, in a way," confessed Dorothy. "It always seemed as if we did not know you and could not get at you, as if you avoided us—with your heart, I mean;—as if you had resolved we should not know you—as if you had something you were afraid we should discover."

"Ah, there it was, you see!" cried Juliet. "And now the hidden thing is revealed! That was it: I never could get rid of the secret that was gnawing at my life. Even when I was hardly aware of it, it was there. Oh, if I had only been ugly, then Paul would never have thought of me!"

She threw herself down again and buried her face.

"Hide me; hide me," she went on, lifting to Dorothy her hands clasped in an agony, while her face continued turned from her. "Let me stay here. Let me die in peace. Nobody would ever think I was here."

"That is just what has been coming and

going in my mind," answered Dorothy. "It is a strange old place: you might be here for months and nobody know."

"Oh! wouldn't you mind it? I shouldn't live long. I couldn't, you know!"

"I will be your very sister, if you will let me," replied Dorothy; "only then you must do what I tell you—and begin at once by promising not to leave the house till I come back to you."

As she spoke she rose.

"But some one will come," said Juliet, half-rising, as if she would run after her.

"No one will. But if any one should—come here, I will show you a place where nobody would find you."

She helped her to rise, and led her from the room to a door in a rather dark passage. This she opened, and, striking a light, showed an ordinary closet, with pegs for hanging garments upon. The sides of it were panelled, and in one of them, not readily distinguishable, was another door. It opened into a room lighted only by a little window high in a wall, through whose dusty, cobwebbed panes, crept a

modicum of second-hand light from a stair.

"There!" said Dorothy. "If you should hear any sound before I come back, run in here. See what a bolt there is to the door. Mind you shut both. You can close that shutter over the window too if you like—only nobody can look in at it without getting a ladder, and there isn't one about the place. I don't believe any one knows of this room but myself."

Juliet was too miserable to be frightened at the look of it—which was wretched enough. She promised not to leave the house, and Dorothy went. Many times before she returned had Juliet fled from the sounds of imagined approach, and taken refuge in the musty dusk of the room withdrawn. When at last Dorothy came, she found her in it, trembling.

She came, bringing a basket with everything needful for breakfast. She had not told her father anything: he was too simple, she said to herself, to keep a secret with comfort; and she would risk anything rather than discovery while yet she did not clearly know what ought to be done. Her version of the excellent French

proverb—*Dans le doute, abstiens-toi*—was, *When you are not sure, wait*—which goes a little farther, inasmuch as it indicates expectation, and may imply faith. With difficulty she prevailed upon her to take some tea, and a little bread and butter, feeding her like a child, and trying to comfort her with hope. Juliet sat on the floor, leaning against the wall, the very picture of despair, white like alabaster, rather than marble—with a bluish whiteness. Her look was of one utterly lost.

"We'll let the fire out now," said Dorothy; "for the sun is shining in warm, and there had better be no smoke. The wood is rather scarce too. I will get you some more, and here are matches: you can light it again when you please."

She then made her a bed on the floor with a quantity of wood shavings, and some shawls she had brought, and when she had lain down upon it, kneeled beside her, and covering her face with her hands, tried to pray. But it seemed as if all the misery of humanity was laid upon her, and God would not speak: not a sound would come from her throat, till she

burst into tears and sobs. It struck a strange chord in the soul of the wife to hear the maiden weeping over her. But it was no private trouble, it was the great need common to all men that opened the fountain of her tears. It was hunger after the light that slays the darkness, after a comfort to confront every woe, a life to lift above death, an antidote to all wrong. It was one of the groanings of the spirit that cannot be uttered in words articulate, or even formed into thoughts defined. But Juliet was filled only with the thought of herself and her husband, and the tears of her friend but bedewed the leaves of her bitterness, did not not reach the dry roots of her misery.

Dorothy's spirit revived when she found herself once more alone in the park on her way home the second time. She must be of better courage, she said to herself. Struggling in the Slough of Despond, she had come upon one worse mired than she, for whose sake she must search yet more vigorously after the hidden stepping-stones—the peaks whose bases are the centre of the world.

"God help me!" she said ever and anon as

she went, and every time she said it, she quickened her pace and ran.

It was just breakfast-time when she reached the house. Her father was coming down the stair.

"Would you mind, father," she said as they sat, "if I were to make a room at the Old House a little comfortable?"

"I mind nothing you please to do, Dorothy," he answered. "But you must not become a recluse. In your search for God, you must not forsake your neighbour."

"If only I could find my neighbour!" she returned, with a rather sad smile. "I shall never be able even to look for him, I think, till I have found one nearer first."

"You have surely found your neighbour when you have found his wounds, and your hand is on the oil-flask," said her father, who knew her indefatigable in her ministrations.

"I don't feel it so," she answered. "When I am doing things for people, my arms seem to be miles long."

As soon as her father left the table, she got her basket again, filled it from the larder and

store-room, laid a book or two on the top, and telling Lisbeth she was going to the Old House for the rest of the day, set out on her third journey thither. To her delight she found Juliet fast asleep. She sat down, rather tired, and began to reflect. Her great fear was that Juliet would fall ill, and then what was to be done? How was she to take the responsibility of nursing her? But she remembered how the Lord had said she was to take no thought for the morrow; and therewith she began to understand the word. She saw that one cannot *do* anything in to-morrow, and that all care which cannot be put into the work of to-day, is taken out of it. One thing seemed clear—that, so long as it was Juliet's desire to remain concealed from her husband, she had no right to act against that desire. Whether Juliet was right or wrong, a sense of security was for the present absolutely necessary to quiet her mind. It seemed therefore, the first thing she had to do was to make that concealed room habitable for her. It was dreadful to think of her being there alone at night, but her trouble was too great to leave much room for fear—and any-

how there was no choice. So while Juliet slept, she set about cleaning it, and hard work she found it. Great also was the labour afterwards, when, piece by piece, at night or in the early morning, she carried thither everything necessary to make abode in it clean and warm and soft.

The labour of love is its own reward, but Dorothy received much more. For, in the fresh impulse and freedom born of this service, she soon found, not only that she thought better and more clearly on the points that troubled her, but that, thus spending herself, she grew more able to believe there must be one whose glory is perfect ministration. Also, her anxious concentration of thought upon the usurping thoughts of others, with its tendency to diseased action in the logical powers, was thereby checked, much to her relief. She was not finding an atom of what is called proof; but when the longing heart finds itself able to hope that the perfect is the fact, that the truth is alive, that the lovely is rooted in eternal purpose, it can go on without such proof as belongs to a lower stratum of things, and

cannot be had in these. When we rise into the mountain air, we require no other testimony than that of our lungs that we are in a healthful atmosphere. We do not find it necessary to submit it to a quantitative analysis; we are content that we breathe with joy, that we grow in strength, become lighter-hearted and better-tempered. Truth is a very different thing from fact; it is the loving contact of the soul with spiritual fact, vital and potent. It does its work in the soul independently of all faculty or qualification there for setting it forth or defending it. Truth in the inward parts is a power, not an opinion. It were as poor a matter as any held by those who deny it, if it had not its vitality in itself, if it depended upon any buttressing of other and lower material.

How should it be otherwise? If God be so near as the very idea of him necessitates, what other availing proof of his existence can there be, than such *awareness* as must come of the developing relation between him and us? The most satisfying of intellectual proofs, if such were to be had, would be of no value. God would be no nearer us for them all. They

would bring about no blossoming of the mighty fact. While he was in our very souls, there would yet lie between him and us a gulf of misery, of no-knowledge.

Peace is for those who *do* the truth, not those who opine it. The true man troubled by intellectual doubt, is so troubled unto further health and growth. Let him be alive and hopeful, above all obedient, and he will be able to wait for the deeper content which must follow with completer insight. Men may say such a man but deceives himself, that there is nothing of the kind he pleases himself with imagining; but this is at least worth reflecting upon—that while the man who aspires fears he may be deceiving himself, it is the man who does not aspire who asserts that he is. One day the former may be sure, and the latter may cease to deny, and begin to doubt!

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DOCTOR'S STUDY.

PAUL FABER'S condition, as he sat through the rest of that night in his study, was about as near absolute misery as a man's could well be, in this life, I imagine. The woman he had been watching through the first part of it as his essential bliss, he had left in a swoon, lying naked on the floor, and would not and did not go near her again. How could he? Had he not been duped, sold, married to——? —That way madness lay! His pride was bitterly wounded. Would it had been mortally! but pride seems in some natures to thrive upon wounds, as in others does love. Faber's pride grew and grew as he sat and brooded, or, rather, was brooded upon.

He, Paul Faber, who knew his own worth

his truth, his love, his devotion—he, with his grand ideas of woman and purity and unity, conscious of deserving a woman's best regards —he, whose love (to speak truly his unworded, undefined impression of himself) any woman might be proud to call hers—he to be thus deceived! to have taken to his bosom one who had before taken another to hers, and thought it yet good enough for him! It would not bear thinking! Indignation and bitterest sense of wrong almost crazed him. For evermore he must be a hypocrite, going about with the knowledge of that concerning himself which he would not have known by others! This was how the woman, whom he had brought back from death with the life of his own heart, had served him! Years ago she had sacrificed her bloom to some sneaking wretch who flattered a God with prayers, then enticed and bewitched and married *him!*

In all this thinking there was no thought but for himself—not one for the woman whose agony had been patent even to his wrath-blinded eyes. In what is the wretchedness of our condition more evident than in this, that the sense

of wrong always makes us unjust! It is a most humbling thought. God help us. He forgot how she had avoided him, resisted him, refused to confess the love which his goodness, his importunities, his besieging love had compelled in her heart. It was true she ought either to have refused him absolutely and left him, or confessed and left the matter with him; but he ought to have remembered for another, if ever he had known it for himself, the hardness of some duties; and what duty could be more torturing to a delicate-minded woman than either of those—to leave the man she loved in passionate pain, sore-wounded with a sense of undeserved cruelty, or to give him the strength to send her from him by confessing to his face what she could not recall in the solitude of her own chamber but the agony would break out wet on her forehead! We do our brother, our sister, grievous wrong, every time that, in our selfish justice, we forget the excuse that mitigates the blame. That God never does, for it would be to disregard the truth. As he will never admit a false excuse, so will he never neglect a true one. It may be

he makes excuses which the sinner dares not think of; while the most specious of false ones shrivel into ashes before him. A man is bound to think of all just excuse for his offender, for less than the righteousness of God will not serve his turn.

I would not have my reader set Faber down as heartless. His life showed the contrary. But his pride was roused to such furious self-assertion, that his heart lay beaten down under the sweep of its cyclone. Its turn was only delayed. The heart is always there, and rage is not. The heart is a constant, even when most intermittent force. It can bide its time. Nor indeed did it now lie quite still; for the thought of that white self-offered sacrifice, let him rave as he would against the stage-trickery of the scene, haunted him so, that once and again he had to rouse an evil will to restrain him from rushing to clasp her to his bosom.

Then there was the question: why now had she told him all—if indeed she had made a clean breast of it? Was it from love to him, or reviving honesty in herself? From neither, he said. Superstition alone was at the root of

it. She had been to church, and the preaching of that honest idiotic enthusiast, Wingfold, had terrified her.—Alas! what refuge in her terror had she found with her husband?

Before morning he had made up his mind as to the course he would pursue. He would not publish his own shame, but neither would he leave the smallest doubt in her mind as to what he thought of her, or what he felt towards her. All should be utterly changed between them. He would behave to her with extreme, with marked politeness; he would pay her every attention woman could claim, but her friend, her husband, he would be no more. His thoughts of vengeance took many turns, some of them childish. He would always call her *Mrs. Faber*. Never, except they had friends, would he sit in the same room with her. To avoid scandal, he would dine with her, if he could not help being at home, but when he rose from the table, it would be to go to his study. If he happened at any time to be in the room with her when she rose to retire, he would light her candle, carry it upstairs for her, open her door, make her a polite bow, and leave her.

Never once would he cross the threshold of her bedroom. She should have plenty of money; the purse of an adventuress was a greedy one, but he would do his best to fill it, nor once reproach her with extravagance—of which fault, let me remark, she had never yet shown a sign. He would refuse her nothing she asked of him—except it were in any way himself. As soon as his old aunt died, he would get her a brougham, but never would he sit in it by her side. Such, he thought, would be the vengeance of a gentleman. Thus he fumed and raved and trifled, in an agony of selfish suffering—a proud, injured man; and all the time the object of his vengeful indignation was lying insensible on the spot where she had prayed to him, her loving heart motionless within a bosom of ice.

In the morning he went to his dressing-room, had his bath, and went down to breakfast, half-desiring his wife's appearance, that he might begin his course of vindictive torture. He could not eat, and was just rising to go out, when the door opened, and the parlour-maid,

who served also as Juliet's attendant, appeared.

"I can't find mis'ess nowhere, sir," she said.

Faber understood at once that she had left him, and a terror, neither vague nor ill-founded, possessed itself of him. He sprung from his seat, and darted up the stair to her room. Little more than a glance was necessary to assure him that she had gone deliberately, intending it should be for ever. The diamond ring lay on her dressing-table, spending itself in flashing back the single ray of the sun that seemed to have stolen between the curtains to find it; her wedding ring lay beside it, and the sparkle of the diamonds stung his heart like a demoniacal laughter over it, the more horrible that it was so silent and so lovely: it was but three days since, in his wife's presence, he had been justifying suicide with every argument he could bring to bear. It was true he had insisted on a proper regard to circumstances, and especially on giving due consideration to the question, whether the act would hurt others more than it would relieve the person contemplating it; but, after the way he had treated

her, there could be no doubt how Juliet, if she thought of it at all, was compelled to answer it. He rushed to the stable, saddled Ruber, and galloped wildly away. At the end of the street he remembered that he had not a single idea to guide him. She was lying dead somewhere, but whether to turn east or west or north or south to find her, he had not the slightest notion. His condition was horrible. For a moment or two he was ready to blow his brains out: that, if the orthodox were right, was his only chance for overtaking her. What a laughing-stock he would then be to them all! The strangest, wildest, maddest thoughts came and went as of themselves, and when at last he found himself seated on Ruber in the middle of the street, an hour seemed to have passed. It was but a few moments, and the thought that roused him was: could she have betaken herself to her old lodging at Owlkirk? It was not likely; it was possible: he would ride and see.

"They will say I murdered her," he said to himself as he rode—so little did he expect ever to see her again. "I don't care. They may

prove it if they can, and hang me. I shall make no defence. It will be but a fit end to the farce of life."

He laughed aloud, struck his spurs in Ruber's flanks, and rode wildly. He was desperate. He knew neither what he felt nor what he desired. If he had found her alive, he would, I do not doubt, have behaved to her cruelly. His life had fallen in a heap about him; he was ruined, and she had done it, he said, he thought, he believed. He was not aware how much of his misery was occasioned by a shrinking dread of the judgments of people he despised. Had he known it, he would have been yet more miserable, for he would have scorned himself for it. There is so much in us that is beyond our reach!

Before arriving at Owlkirk, he made up his mind that, if she were not there, he would ride to the town of Broughill—not in the hope of any news of her, but because there dwelt the only professional friend he had in the neighbourhood—one who sympathized with his views of things, and would not close his heart against him because he did not believe that this horrid,

ugly, disjointed thing of a world had been made by a God of love. Generally, he had been in the way of dwelling on the loveliness of its developments, and the beauty of the gradual adaptation of life to circumstance; but now it was plainer to him than ever, that, if made at all, it was made by an evil being; "—for," he said, and said truly, "a conscious being without heart must be an evil being." This was the righteous judgment of a man who could, by one tender, consoling word, have made the sun rise upon a glorious world of conscious womanhood, but would not say that word, and left that world lying in the tortured chaos of a slow disintegration. This conscious being with a heart, this Paul Faber, who saw that a God of love was the only God supposable, set his own pride so far above love, that his one idea was, to satisfy the justice of his outraged dignity by the torture of the sinner!—even while all the time dimly aware of rebuke in his soul. If she should have destroyed herself, he said once and again as he rode, was it more than a just sacrifice to his wronged honour? As such he would accept it. If she had, it was best—best

for her, and best for him! What so much did it matter! She was very lovely—true!—but what was the quintessence of dust to him? Where either was there any great loss? He and she would soon be wrapped up in the primal darkness, the mother and grave of all things, together!—no, not together; not even in the dark of nothingness could they two any more lie together! Hot tears forced their way into his eyes, whence they rolled down, the lava of the soul, scorching his cheeks. He struck his spurs into Ruber fiercely, and rode madly on.

At length he neared the outskirts of Broughill. He had ridden at a fearful pace across country, leaving all to his horse, who had carried him wisely as well as bravely. But Ruber, although he had years of good work left in him, was not in his first strength, and was getting exhausted with his wild morning. For, all the way, his master, apparently unconscious of everything else, had been immediately aware of the slightest slackening of muscle under him, the least faltering of the onward pace, and, in the temper of the savage, which wakes the

moment the man of civilization is hard put to it, the moment he flagged, still drove the cruel spurs into his flanks, when the grand, unresenting creature would rush forward at straining speed—not, I venture to think, so much in obedience to the pain, as in obedience to the will of his master, fresh recognized through the pain.

Close to the high road, where they were now approaching it through the fields, a rail-fence had just been put up, enclosing a piece of ground which the owner wished to let for building. That the fact might be known, he was about to erect a post with a great board announcing it. For this post a man had dug the hole, and then gone to his dinner. The enclosure lay between Faber and the road, in the direct line he was taking. On went Ruber blindly—more blindly than his master knew, for, with the prolonged running, he had partially lost his sight, so that he was close to the fence before he saw it. But he rose boldly, and cleared it—to light, alas! on the other side with a foreleg in the hole. Down he came with a terrible crash, pitched his master into the road

upon his head, and lay groaning with a broken leg. Faber neither spoke nor moved, but lay as he fell. A poor woman ran to his assistance, and finding she could do nothing for him, hurried to the town for help. His friend, who was the first surgeon in the place, flew to the spot, and had him carried to his house. It was a severe case of concussion of the brain.

Poor old Ruber was speedily helped to a world better than this for horses, I trust.

Meantime Glaston was in commotion. The servants had spread the frightful news that their mistress had vanished, and their master ridden off like a madman. "But he won't find her alive, poor lady! I don't think," was the general close of their communication, accompanied by a would-be wise and really sympathetic shake of the head. In this conclusion most agreed, for there was a general impression of something strange about her, partly occasioned by the mysterious way in which Mrs. Puckridge had spoken concerning her illness and the marvellous thing the doctor had done to save her life. People now supposed that she had gone suddenly mad, or, rather, that

the latent madness so plain to read in those splendid eyes of hers had been suddenly developed, and that under its influence she had rushed away, and probably drowned herself. Nor were there wanting, among the discontented women of Glaston, some who regarded the event—vaguely to their own consciousness, I gladly admit—as *almost a judgment* upon Faber for marrying a woman of whom nobody knew anything.

Hundreds went out to look for the body down the river. Many hurried to an old quarry, half full of water, on the road to Broughill, and peered horror-stricken over the edge, but said nothing. The boys of Glaston were mainly of a mind that the pond at the Old House was of all places the most likely to attract a suicide, for with the fascination of its horrors they were themselves acquainted. Thither therefore they sped; and soon Glaston received its expected second shock in the tidings that a lady's bonnet had been found floating in the frightful pool; while in the wet mass the boys brought back with them, some of her acquaintance recognized with certainty a bon-

net they had seen Mrs. Faber wear. There was no room left for doubt: the body of the poor lady was lying at the bottom of the pool! A multitude rushed at once to the spot, although they knew it was impossible to drag the pool, so deep was it, and for its depth so small. Neither would she ever come to the surface, they said, for the pikes and eels would soon leave nothing but the skeleton. So Glaston took the whole matter for ended, and began to settle down again to its own affairs, condoling greatly with the poor gentleman, such a favourite! who, so young, and after such a brief experience of marriage, had lost, in such a sad way, a wife so handsome, so amiable, so clever. But some said a doctor ought to have known better than marry such a person, however handsome, and they hoped it would be a lesson to him. On the whole, so sorry for him was Glaston, that, if the doctor could then have gone about it invisible, he would have found he had more friends and fewer enemies than he had supposed.

For the first two or three days no one was surprised that he did not make his appearance.

They thought he was upon some false trail. But when four days had elapsed and no news was heard of him, for his friend, knowing nothing of what had happened, had written to Mrs. Faber, and the letter lay unopened, some began to hint that he must have had a hand in his wife's disappearance, and to breathe a presentiment that he would never more be seen in Glaston. On the morning of the fifth day, however, his accident was known, and that he was lying insensible at the house of his friend, Dr. May; whereupon, although here and there might be heard the expression of a pretty strong conviction as to the character of the visitation, the sympathy both felt and uttered was larger than before. The other medical men immediately divided his practice amongst them, to keep it together against his possible return, though few believed he would ever again look on scenes darkened by the memory of bliss so suddenly blasted.

For weeks his recovery was doubtful, during which time, even if they had dared, it would have been useless to attempt acquainting him with what all believed the certainty of his loss.

But when at length he woke to a memory of the past, and began to desire information, his friend was compelled to answer his questions. He closed his lips, bowed his head on his breast, gave a great sigh, and held his peace. Every one saw that he was terribly stricken.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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